THE HYSTO-rie of the Seaven wise Maisters of Rome.

Now newly corrected, better explayned in many places, & enlarged with many pretty Pictures, liuely expressing the full HISTORY.

AT LONDON,
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To the Reader.

READER: for thy better delight, and more plainely to set forth this Historie to thy view, I haue to my great cost, added many pictures liuely expressing the most materiall points contained in euery Example. For which paines of mine, If I may receiue thy thankes, I thinke it a sufficient reward. The HISTORY *of it selfe, is both ancient and Morall, and contayneth in it much of that learning, when Ignorance hauing a thicke and dull eare, men were compelled to draw the rude multitude to attention of good instructions, by such pleasing allurements of Tales, and Fables, as in this booke are set downe: that whilst the mind is fed and deligh-*

ted with the ſweetneſſe of the Fabulous Storie, the Soule it ſelfe at the end (by often taſting the ſame nouriſhment) might grow quicker-ſighted to behold the hidden and myſticall wiſdome contained vnder ſuch cloſe Riddles. For, in few wordes, to giue you the meaning of this Morall, it is thus: The Emperor may ſignifie the World, who hauing but one only beloued Sonne (who is MAN) him to bring vp well, is all his care. But Man, looſing his owne Mother (who is Reaſon, or Divine Grace,) and falling into the hands of his Step-mother, (ſignifying Sinne) who is an Empreſſe of great bewitching, and one that Commaunds the World, ſhee workes by all meanes poſſible the vtter confuſion of Man.

And would preuaile againſt his weakeneſſe, but that a Starre from Heauen, (by which is meant, goodneſſe from aboue) inſtructs Man how to auoyd the allurements of Sinne, by not opening his mouth, to bid her welcome. And the better to preuent her miſchiefes, hee hath Seaven wiſe Maiſters, which are Seaven liberall Sciences, to giue him wholeſome inſtru-

ctions,

ctions, aud by these helpes saue him from mortall danger. So that being thus arm'd, Man liueth to batter downe Sinne (figured in the death of the Empresse and her Mynions) And in the end, to gaine a rich crowne of glory, and happinesse, set ready for al those that in this life labour to attayne to Heaven by doing well,

this is the Explanation of this Morall,
of which if thou makest right vse,
it will be as a rich banquet to thy Soule.
Farewell.

* *
*

Heere beginneth the Hiſtorie of the Seauen wiſe Maiſters of ROME.

Contaynning many pleaſant and witty narratious very delightfull to the READER.

¶ The entrance into the Morall, which (according to thinges of Comicke pleaſure) properly begins with a Funerall.

SOmetime in the Citty of Rome there was a famous Emperour named Pontianus, a man of great wiſedome: hee tooke to his wife a kings Daughter that was very faire, amiable, to all people gratious, and to her husband right deere, ſhee conceiued by him, & was deliuered of a ſon named Diocleſian. The Childe grew apace,

and of all people was beloned: and when hee was of the age of Seauen yæres, his Mother the Empresse falling sore sicke, and fæling her selfe that she might not liue, sent after her Lord the Emperour (being rode forth on progresse) a messenger, that hee should returne without tarrying, if euer he would sæ her aliue.

And when he was come, shee said vnto him, Oh my dære Lord, of this infirmity I may not escape, wherefore the naturall and tender loue and care that is in mæ towardes you and your Sonne, makes a suite to you before my death: hee

hee answered, desire what you will, for I shall not deny you any thing. Then said shée, after my death you shall take another Wife, as is most conuenient, wherfore I instantly beseech you, that shée ouer my Sonne haue no power nor gouernance but that hee bée kept and nourished far from her, and that he may be trained vp in learning and wisedome. The Emperour then answered, my most deare wife, your petition in all things shall be fullfilled & performed: Then turned the Empresse, and gaue vp the Ghost. Many dayes after the Emperour bewayled and mourned her death, and long after her burying hee shewed his heauinesse and sorrow, & would in no wise marry, or be toyfull.

¶ How the Emperour committed and deliuered his Sonne to the *Seauen wise Maisters* to be instructed in Learning.

Vpon a time as the Emperor lay in his bed, he bethought him inwardly of his Sonne, saying in his heart, I haue onely but one Sonne, the which shall be mine Heire, it is good whilest hee is

young, that he be set to learne cunning & wise-
dome, by the which he may after my death gou-
uerne and rule the Empire. Intimating ther-
by, that a worthy Prince, taking vpon him so
great a weight & charge, as the gouernement of
a kingdome, ought first to learne to be his own
gouernour, and to master his owne affections.
So that, when he was early risen vp from his
Bed, hee caused to bee called the Lords of his
Counsell before him, and of them toke aduice
what were best therein to be done. And they an-
swered, Lord, in Rome are Seauen wise Ma-
sters, who liue in great fame for their excellen-
cy in Arts, graue Counsell, & Instruction; let
them be sent for, & deliuer them your son to be
fostered and instructed in learning. The Em-
perour vnderstanding that, sent his Letters
made powerfull by his owne seale to the Se-
uen wise Maisters, that they incontinently
should come to him without delay: And they a-
non came before the Emperor, & he demanded
of them if they knew wherefore that he had sent
for them? They answerd, the cause is as your
will intendeth, we know not, but if it please
you to shew vs your mind & intent, we be rea-
dy to fulfill it to the vttermost of our powers.
To whome the Noble Emperour sayd, I haue
but one Sonne the which I shall deliuer vnto
you

you to conforme in all good waies of learning and vertue, so that by our Doctrine and wisedome, he may the more wisely guide & gouerne the Empire after my decease.

The first Maister named PANTILLAS said, Lord, deliuer to me your Sonne, and I shall teach him as much cunning within Seauen yeares, as I and all my fellowes can.

Then spake the second Maister named LENTVLVS, Sir, of long time I haue serued you, and hitherto I haue had no manner of reward, I demand nothing else of you, but that you deliuer me your Son to keepe and gouerne, and

I shall make him as cunning within fyve yeers, as I and all my fellows be.

The third Master named CRATON said, my Lord, many times haue I beene with you vpon the Sea in perill of my life, and of you haue I had no manner of reward: if that I might for my recompence now, obtaine, that you will vouchsafe to commit your Son vnder my rule and gouernance, I should informe him as much within fiue yeeres, if his wit will thereto attaine, as I and all my fellowes can.

Then stood vp the Fourth Maister named Malquidrake, who was right leane of bodie, and said, my Lord, call to your remembrance how that I and all my predecessors haue seruen Emperors, and haue receiued no manner of reward, wherfore I shal aske no other thing but that ye will deliuer me your Sonne to informe and teach, and I shall make him to take as much science and wisedome within Foure yeares as I and all my fellowes haue learned in all our liues.

Then spake the fift Master that was named Iosephus, Lord, I am old and many times I am called to your Counsell, and you know that my Counsell hath auailed and profited you, and so likewise may it bee hereafter: yet notwithstanding I desire no more, but that you will

deliuer

deliuer me your son, and I shall instruct, & informe him in as much cunning & science, that hee within three yeres shall profit in wit as much as I and all my fellowes haue.

Then came forth the first master named Cleophas, who said like to the other, promising him to learn and informe the Child in all their cunning in two yeres.

The Seauenth master rose vp & sayd, who also desired the Child, & promised for to learne him within one yere, the sciences & wisedome of them all.

When all this was done, the Emperor said, my trusty friends, I am very much bound to thanke you all, and euery one of you, for that you haue so earnestly with contention desired to foster and instruct my Sonne; If I should now commit him to one, and not to another, thereupon would ensue much dissention & variance among you. Therfore to you all & euery of you I commit my sonne to be nourished & taught. The Maisters hearing this, expressing both their greatnesse of ioy, and forwardnes in wil to the Emperor, all with one harmony of consent take and receiued his son, and led him towards the Court of Rome. Vppon the Way spake Craton to his fellowes, If we this child should teach within the City of Rome, there

in

is so great resort and concourse of people, that it would hinder and let him in his learning: I know a faire place from Rome some 3. myles, right pleasaunt and delectable, there let vs make a foure square Chamber of stone, and put him therein, and vpon the wals thereof let vs paint and write the Seauen liberall Arts, so that the Child at all times may see and behold his Doctrine therin, as well as in his Booke: and this aduise and counsell pleased them all, and was done accordingly in euery poynt. The Maisters diligently euery day during seauen yeares taught and instructed the Child, and determined amongst themselues and said, it is good that we examine our Disciple, to see to what perfection our paines hath arriued at, and to what strength & growth his vertue and knowledge is come to: and they all wisely and religiously accorded to that counsell. Then sayd Maister Pantillas, How shall wee prooue him, Craton said, let euery one of vs as hee sleepeth, put vnder euery corner of his Bed, an Olive leafe, and then we shall know if he perceiued or felt any thing, or not: this done, hee awaking, greatly marualled & lifted vp his eyes toward the rose of the Chamber feruently: the Maisters seeing ỹ, said, wherfore lift you vp your eies so sharply: he answered, it is no marualle,

for

for in my sleepe I saw the uppermost part of the Chamber inclined toward the Earth, or else under me it was lifted up: the Maisters hearing this, said among themselues, if this Child may liue, he shall be a man of great cunning & fame.

¶ How the Emperour by the Counsell of the great Princes & Lords of his Empire, wedded another wife.

THe Princes and great Lordes of the Empire, in the mean time came to the Emperor and sayd, my Lord, ye haue onely but one Son, it is possible that he might happen to die, and therefore it were profitable that you would wedde another Wife, that therby your ioyes and hopes might be blest with a more faire certainty, and assured happinesse in your Race and Issue, to the intent that the Empire of Rome bee not left without an Heire. Moreouer, yée are so mighty, that if it should happen you to get many Children, ye may promote and aduance them all to great Dignityes & Lordships. Whereunto answered the Emperour, is it your Counsell that I shall take another Wife? then seeke me

one

one that is gratious, a pure Virgin, faire, and gentle borne, & then shall I follow your counsell and aduice. They went and sought and searched out many kingdomes & Countries, & at the last they found the Kings Daughter of Castile, that was right faire and beautifull, & her they gaue the Emperour to wife, who behaued her selfe so wel, that anon he was so greatly taken in her loue, that he forgat al the heauines and sorrow of heart that he had taken for the death of his first wife. And when they had liued long together without Children, and the Empresse saw wel that she might not conceiue, Then when she heard that the Emperour had a Son with the Seauen wise Maisters to bee fostered & taught, to the great good and profit of the Empire; she thought in her selfe & wished his death. And from that houre forth, she imagined how shee might conspire his destruction. It happned on a night as the Emperour lay in his bed, he said to the Empresse: My most deer and best beloued wife, I shall now shew & open to you the secrets of my hart, for vnder the sun is there no creature that I loue so wel as you, and therefore trust in my loue.

Then said the faire Empresse, if it be so as you say, I require of you one little boon, or petition: Desire what you wil said the Emperor,

and

and all that to mée is possible, I shall fulfill and giue it to you. Then sayd the Empresse, my déere Lord, you know I haue no Child by you yet conceiued, for which I am sore pensiue and heauy; But fame that neuer conceales it selfe long to true ioy, hath deliuered this happy truth to me, that ye haue one Sonne only, the which is set to the Seauen wise Maisters to bée taught and gouerned, and him hold I and repute for mine owne Sonne: wherefore I beséech you that yée will send for him that I may sée him and haue consolation of his presence, as though he were mine owne. Hérevpon answered the Emperour, it is Sixtéene yeares past since that I saw him; your will shall be fulfilled. Incontinent the Emperour sent vnto the Seauen wise Maisters a Letter sealed with his secret Signe, that vpon paine of death they should bring his Son in the feast of Pentecost following.

¶ How the Seuen wiſe Maſters after the ſight of the Emperours letters, would firſt obſerue the courſe and diuine foreſhewings of the Firmament and Planets, whether it were good to obey his Commandement, or not.

AND as the Maiſter had read the Letter, & had vnderſtood the will of the Emperor, in ỹ night time they went and beheld the ſtars in the firmament, whether it ſhould bee expedient to take their Iourney with the Child after the Emperors

perours will, or not: And they saw clærely in the starres that if they should leade the child in that time assigned, at the first word he should speake, he should dy an euill death. Wherefore they were all right sorry: and as they beheld another Star, they saw, that if they delinered not the Child at the day aforesaid, they should lose their heads. Then said one of them, of two euils the least is to be chosen: it is better that all we die, then that the Child should lose his life: therfore that we may saue the Childs life, let vs goe to the Emperour. And as they were thus sorrowfull, the child came down from his Chamber, and séeing his Maisters so heauy, he demaunded then the cause of their heauinesse: whereupon they answered: sir, we haue receiued your fathers letters, that vpon paine of death now in this high feast of Pentecost we should leade you to your country, whereupon we haue beholden the firmament, wherein we clærely sée and find, that if wée within the time before prefixed present you to your father, At the first word ỹ ye shall pronounce out of your mouth ye shall be to the most vilest death condemned. Then said the child, I must also behold the firmament with the stars, and so he did, & found clære in a little star; that if he could abstayne from speaking seauen dayes, he should be pre-

serued, and saue his life. And after he had seen this, he called his masters, & shewed them the Star and sayd, behold my deere masters, I see perfectly in the star, that if I abstayne my self e by the space of vij. dayes, I shall saue my life. Yea are now vij. maisters the wisest of all the world, it is an easie thing for you, that euery of you for me one day do answer, and with your wise answer. euery of you his day my life may saue & keep; and I in the eight day shall speak of my selfe, and shall saue my life, and all you from perill. As the maisters had beholden that certayne starre, they iudged with themselues that the child had said troth, saying, Almighty God be thanked, that the wisedome and cunning of our disciple excedeth vs all. Then sayd the First Master Pantillas, Lord I shall speake for you the First day, and saue your life. And Lentulus the second Maister sayd, I shall for you the second day answer: & so consequently euery of them promised to answere for himselfe his day. And this sayd, they cloathed the child in purple, and leapt on horseback with a faire company, and hasted them with the child to the Emperour.

¶ How the Emperour rode to meete his son comming from study, with much ioy, solemnity and Tryumph.

WHen the Emperour perceiued that his Sonne was comming vppon the way, hee Rode with great ioy to meete him. The maisters vnderstanding the comming of the Emperour, said vnto the Child, it is best that we depart, that in the meane while we may prouide how we may saue your life. The Child sayd, it pleaseth me well,

well, ỹ you do so, but haue mind of me in time of my necessity: so they toke leaue & departed towardes the Citty, and the Childe came after accompanied most honourably. And as he and his father the Emperor met, for ioy and gladnes he toke his son about the necke and kissed him, and sayd, my deere Son, now is my ioy compleat, beholding in thee the treasure of my lifes comfort. How is it with you, it is long since that I saw you? He bowed downe his head and answered nothing: The Father had great wonder why that he spake not, & thought in himself e that his maisters had informed him so, that he riding should not speake. And when they were come into the Palace, and were descended from their Horses, the father toke his Son by the hand, and led him into the Hall & set him next him, & beheld him, & said: Tell mee now how it is with your Maisters, how haue they instructed you these many yeres past since I saw you? But hee inclined down his head, and spake not: The Father sayd, wherefore speake ye not to mee? And when the Empresse heard that the Emperours Sonne was come, she was right ioyous and glad, and said I will go see him, shee apparelled her selfe with rich attire, & took with her two of her Gentlewomen, and went there as the Emperour was

sit-

sitting with his Sonne, and sate her downe by the child, and shée sayd to the Emperor, is this your sonne that hath been nourished with the Seauen wise Masters? And hée sayd it is my Sonne, but he speaketh not: shée sayd deliuer to me your sonne, and if euer he speake, I shall make him to speake. Then said the Emperor rise, and goe with her: the Son did reuerence to his father, as though he sayd, I am ready to accomplish your will, and so went with her.

¶ How the Empresse led Diocleſian the Emperours ſon with her into her chamber, for to make good cheare with him, the which he withſtood.

THE Empresse led him with her into her Chamber, and comanded all other to avoyd, and set him by her afore her bed side, and sayd, O my best beloued Diocleſian, I haue heard much of your person and Beauty, but now I am glad that I may sée that with mine eies, which my heart coueteth and loueth: For I haue caused

your father to send for you, that I might haue
solace & ioy of your person. Wherefore right
hartily I giue you knoledge, that I for your
loue, vnto this day haue kept my Virginitie;
speake to me therefore and let vs go to bed to-
gether: but he gaue her no answer. She seeing
that, said to him; O good Diocleſian, which
hast the halfe of my soule, why speake ye not
to me, or at the least shew mee some token of
loue? what shall I doe, speake to mee, I am
ready to fulfill and performe your will: and
when she had thus said, shee imbraced him, and
would haue kissed his mouth, but he turned his
visage from her, and in no wise would consent:
then said shee againe to him, O Sonne where-
fore doe ye thus with me, let vs sleep together,
and then shall ye well perceiue, that for your
loue I haue kept my virginitie: but he turned
his visage againe from her. She seeing that of
her he was ashamed, shewed vnto him her na-
ked bodie & brests, & said, behold my Son, what
bodie I haue, it is at your will, a seruant and
subiect to your delight and pleasure, giue mee
your consent, or else it shall be hard for mee to
depart hence with my right mind: he neither
with signe nor with countenance of his visage,
shewed her any manner of loue, but as much
as hee could, with-drew himselfe from her.

When

When she saw that, she said, O my sweete sonne, if it please not you to consent to me, ne yet speake, perhaps for some resonable cause, lo here is paper, pen & inke, then wright your will, whether I may at any time hereafter trust in your loue, or not. The child wrote as hereafter followeth: O Lady, God forbid that I should defile my Fathers Orchard, for I wote not what fruite I should haue of it, I know well one thing, that I should sin greatly in the sight of God, and also run in the malediction of my father, and therefore from hencefoorth I pray you to prouoke & stir me no more thereto. When she had seene & read the writing she tare it with her teeth, and rent her clothes of her nauill, and all to scratched her Visage, vntil it was all bloody, & cast from her all the ornaments of her head, and cryed with a loud voyce, come hither my Lords & helpe me, least that this rude and euill body shame and rauish me.

How the Empresse complayned to the Emperour, of the shame done vnto her by his Sonne.

The Emperor beeing in the Hall, and hearing the noise and cry of the Empresse, he hastily

hastily ran toward his chamber with many
his knights and other of his seruants followi
him, to see what was the matter. Then bega
the Empresse to cry, & speake to the Emperou
in this case: O my lord, haue pitty & compass
on vpon me, behold, this yong man is not yo
Son, but the foulest for Rybauldry, and ac
ons of Luxury, that euer sinne and heate p
strength into: for as you know well I led hi
and brought him with me into my chamber.
would haue exhorted and caused him to ha
spoken. I haue done as much thereto as I ca
or may: & whiles I with my words exhort
and moued him to haue spoken, hee hath ind
nored himselfe with me to haue sinned, and b
cause I wold not w̄ him consent, but withst
as much as I might to flée the same, hée ha
made my Visage all bloody, & hath all to to
my vesture and ornaments of my head as y
may openly see, & if he had not sone come b
to my calling, hee had ended in me his m
foule and wicked appetite. When the Emp
ror saw and heard this, (filled with great m
lice and wodnes, hee commanded his seruan
that they should lead him to the gallowes, a
hang him. And when the Lords heard there
they said, Lord you haue no more but this s
only, it is not good that ye thus lightly put hi

to death: the law is ordained for transgressors & mislowers. And if it be so that he must dy, let him by the law dy, lest that it be sayd, that the Emperour in his great fury & wrath (without Law and iustice) hath put his onely Sonne to death. As the Emperor heard this, he commanded him to be put in prison, untill the time that iudgment were giuen against him. And when the Empresse vnderstood that the child was not put to death, she cri'd & wept bitterly, & would take no rest; when the night was come, ỳ Emperor entred into his chamber to goe to Bed, and found his wife weeping and sorrowing, to whom hee sayd, O my deare Lady, for what cause are ye sorrowful? she answered know you not how that your accursed Son hath done me so much shame, and so dishonored you, that ye haue commanded him to be hanged, and yet he liueth & your word is not performed, neither is my shame reuenged. To morrow said the Emperor he shall die by the law: then sayd she shall he so long liue? Then might it happen to you as it did to a Burgesse of Rome, of whom an example is mentioned: the Emperor sayd, I pray you shew me that example: That shall I doe gladly saye the Empresse.

The First example of the Empresse.

IN the Citty of Rome was a Burgesse, the which had a faire Garden, wherein hée had standing a Noble Trée, the which euery yeare brought forth fruite of great vertue; for whosoeuer eate thereof that were sicke of any manner of sickness or Leprosie, he should sone be whole, and receiue his health.

At hapned vpon a day as the Burgesse went into his Garden to visite & see the Tree, he espied vnder the tree a faire yong impe & called to him the Gardiner, and said: My friend, of this yong Impe I give thee charge, for I trust of that to plant a better tree then this is. The Gardiner said, I shall it gladly doe. Another time the Burgesse came again into his garden to visite the yong Plant, and it appeared vnto him that it grew not so much as it should do & he said to the Gardiner, how may this be: & he said, it is no wonder, for this great tree hath so great armes & branches, that the ayre may not come to the rote of the yong tree: then said the Burgesse cut and hew off the armes & the boughs that the aire may come thereto: The Gardiner did as he was cõmanded. The Burgesse came againe another time to see the yong plant & thought that it grew neuer the better, & said to the Gardiner, what is it that letteth this Plant to grow now: And then he said, I suppose the height of the old Tree letteth the Sun, that the raine may not come thereto, and therefore it cannot grow. Then said the maister vnto him hew downe that Tree to the ground, for I hope of this plant to haue a better then euer that was. The Gardiner hearing his maister, obeyed him and hewed downe the tree, and

as sone as this was done, the young Plant all wholy perished, and came to nought, whereof came great harme, for when the poore and sicke people perceiued that the Tree was destroied, they cursed all them that were counsellors and helpers thereto, by the which they oftentimes were healed and cured of their infirmities and maladies. Then said ỹ Empresse to her Lord. vnderstand ye what I haue said: He answer'd yea, right well: then said she, I shall declare to you the meaning of that which I haue said.

The declaration of the Example.

THis Tree, my Lord, betokeneth your most Noble Person, how that with your counsell & helpe many poore and sicke folke are greatly holpen and comforted: And the young Impe which is growne vnder the great tree, is your accursed Son, that now by cunning beginneth to grow and studieth how he may first cut off the Armes and boughes of your might, and how to wyn to him the land and fauour of the people; yea & more vnnaturally, imagineth to destroy your person, that he may himselfe raigne, but what

shall

hal then ensue thereof: All powre and feeble peo-
le shall curse them, who might haue destroy'd
your Son, and haue not done it, therefore I
counsell you whilest you are in your power, &
liuing, that ye destroy him, least that the curse
f the people fall vpon you. Then said the Em-
peror, ye haue giuen me good counsell, to mor-
ow I shall condemne him to the vilest death
hat can be thought vpon. When the day was
ome, the Emperor went and sate in Judge-
ment, and commanded his seruants that they
hould lead his son to be hanged, with Trum-
ets sounding in token of death. And as ỳ Em-
perours Son was led through the Cittie, the
common people began to weepe and cry, Alas
he onely son of the Emperour is led towards
his death, and therewithall came Pantillas the
first Maister riding vpon a horse: When the
Child saw him, he bowed his head to him, as
though he had said, haue mind vpon me when
you come before my father, see how I am led
towardes the Gallowes. Then the Maister
said to ỳ seruants, make no hast, for I hope by
he grace of God this day to deliuer him from
eath. Then said all the people, O good master
ast you to the Pallace, & saue your Disciple:
e smote the horse with his Spurres till hee
ame to the Pallace, and kneeled to the Empe-

rour

our and did him reuerence. To whom the Em
perour said, it shall neuer be to thee good, wh
answered I haue deserued a better reward: th
Emperor said there thou lieſt, for I deliuere
him to thee in all things well mannered, & no
he is brought home dumbe, and hath sought t
worke his will to the shame of my vertuou
Empresse, & to the dishonour of his fathers be
for euer, therefore this day he shall die, & ye al
shall die a shamefull death. Then said the M
ster, Lord, for so much as your Sonne spea
keth not, the cause therof God knoweth, & wit
out cause it is not, as ye shall vnderstand, an
where you say that he would haue committe
the Sin of enforcement on your Empresse, I
shall say to you of a troth, he hath beene in ou
company by the space of sirtéene yeares, & we
neuer could perceiue such abuse by him. An
therefore my déere Lord, I shall shew you on
thing, that if you put your Son to death for th
wordes of your Wife, it shall happen to yo
worsethen to a Knight, which killed his bes
Greyhound through the wordes of his Wife,
which saued his son from death. Then said th
Emperor to the maister, tell mée that exam
ple. The Master said, Lord y shall I not doe,
for before I shall make an end thereof, your so
might be dead, and then in vaine and without

hop

hope should I rehearse it: but if it pleaseth you this noble example to heare, call againe your Son till to morrow, and as ye thinke by reason then doe with him your pleasure. As the Emperor heard that, anon he willed the child to bee called againe, and in the meane time he set him in prison while the master finisht his tale, and then he began in this manner, as followeth.

The Example of the First Maister.

THERE was a valiant knight which had one only Son, as you have, the which he lou'd so much, that he ordained for his kæpers 3. Nourishers: The first should giue him sucke and fæd him: the second should wash him and kæp him cleane, & the third should bring him to his slæpe and rest. This knight had also a Greyhound & a Fawlcon, which he also lored right well. The greyhound was so good, that he never ran at any game, but he took it, and held it till his master came. And if his master dispos-ed him to go vnto any battell, if he should not fæd therein, anon as he should amount vpon his horse, the greyhound would take the horse

taile in his mouth, and draw backward, and would also cry & houle marvailously loud. By these signes & the due observation therof, the knight did alwaies understand that his Journey should haue very ill successe. The Faulcon was so gentle and hardy, that he was neuer cast off to his prey, but he toke it.

The same knight had great pleasure in Juſting and Tourney, so that vpon a time vnder his Castle he proclaimed a Tournament, to the which came many great Lords & knights. The knight entred into the Tourney, and his Lady went with her maidens to sée it, and as they went out, after went the nourishers, and left the child lying alone there in the Cradle in the Hall, where the greyhound lay nigh the wall, and the Hauke or Faulcon standing vpon a Perch. In this Hall there was a Serpent lurking, or hid in a hole, to all them of ỹ Castle vnknowne, the which when he perceiued that they were all absent, hæ put his head out of his hole, and when he saw none but the Child lying in the cradle, he went out of his hole towards the cradle for to haue slaine the Child. The Noble Faulcon perceiuing that, and he beholding the greyhound that was slæping, made such a noyse & rustling with her wings presently, that the Greyhound awoke

and

and rose vp, and when hee saw the Serpent nigh the child, anon against him he leapt, and they both fought so long together, vntill that the serpent had grieuously hurt and wounded the Greghound, that he bled so sore, that the earth about the Cradle was all bloody. The greyhound when that he felt himselfe so grieuously wounded and hurt, start fiercely vpon the Serpent, and fought so sore together, & so eagerly that betweene them the Cradle was ouertost with the child, the bottome vpward.

And because that the cradle had foure pomels like feet, falling towards the earth, they saued the childs life and his visage from any hurt,

what can be more expresse to make good ỹ wonder in the preseruation of the Child: Incontinently hereafter, with great paine the greyhound ouercame & slew the Serpent, and laid him downe againe in his place, and licked his wounds. And anon after as the Iusts & Tourney was done, the Nourishers came first into the Castell, and as they saw the cradle turned the vpside downe vpon the earth compassed round about with blood, & that the greyhound was also bloody, they thought & said amongst themselues that the greyhound had slaine the child: & were not so wise as to turne vp the cradle againe with the child, for to haue seene what was thereof befallen. But they said, let vs run away, least that our Maister should put or lay the blame vpon vs, & so slay vs. As they were thus running away, they met with the knights wife, & she said to them, wherfore make ye this sorrow, & whether will ye run: then said they, O Lady, woe and sorrow bee to vs, and to you: why said shee what is there happed, shew me: The greyhound they said, that our Lord & master loueth so well, hath deuoured and slaine your son, and lieth by the wall all full of blood. As the Lady had heard this, shee presently fell to the earth, and began to weepe and cry pitiously, and said, alas, O my

deere

deare son, are ye thus slaine & dead, what shal I now do, that I haue mine onely Son thus lost? héere withall came in the knight from ỳ Tourney, & beholding his Lady thus crying & making sorrow, he demanded of her wherfore she made so great sorrow & lamentation: she answered him, O Lord, your Greyhound that you haue loued so much, hath slaine your only son, & lyeth by the wall satiate with the blood of the child. The knight very exceeding angry, went into the Hall, & the Greyhound went to mæt him, and did fawne vpon him as he was wont to do, & the knight drew out his sword, and with one stroke smote off the greyhounds head, & then he went to the cradle where the Child lay, & found his Son all whole & by the Cradle the serpent slaine, and then by diuers signes he perceiued that the greyhound had killed the Serpent for the defence of the Child. Then with great sorrow and wæping he tare his hayre, and said, woe be to me, that for the words of my wife, I haue slaine my good and best greyhound the which hath saued my childs life, and hath slaine the Serpent: Therfore I will put my selfe to penance, and so he brake his sword in Three péces, and went towards the holy Land, and abode there all the daies of his life. Then said the Master to the Empe-

rour, Lord vnderstand ye what I haue sayd: and he answered and sayd, right well. The Maister sayd if that ye doe put your Sonne to death for the words of your wife, it shall happen to you worse than it did to the Knight for his Greyhound. The Emperour said, ye haue shewed me a faire example, & without doubt this day my Sonne shall not die: then said the Master, if ye doe so, ye doe wisely, and I thank you that ye haue now spared him this day for my sake.

¶ The Second complaint of the Empresse. A sorrow mingled with much cunning, and Falshood.

WHEN that the Empresse heard that the child was not yet dead, she began to weepe bitterly, and sate her downe on the earth in Ashes, and would not lift vp her head: when the Emperor heard that shee entred into the Chamber, & said vnto her, O good Wife, wherfore make you all this sorrow, & trouble your selfe so much? she said, aske ye that of me? Know you not well what great despight & shame I haue suffered of your vnhappy Sonne, & now ye haue promised me that

hat you would ſée Juſtice to be therfoꝛe execu-
ted on him, and yet he lineth? Of troth it ſhal
happen to you as it happened to a ſhepheard &
a Boꝛe. The Emperoꝛ ſaid, I pꝛay you ſhew
me that example foꝛ my learning: ſhée ſayd as
yeſterday I ſhewed you one, and ſaw no good
effect that came thereof, to what end ſhould I
now do the like? Neuertheles, I ſhall declare
this noble example vnto you, as hereafter you
ſhall heare.

The ſecond Example of the Empreſſe

THere was ſomtime an Empe-
roꝛ the which had a gꝛeat foꝛ-
reſt, wherein was a wild Boꝛe
which was ſo cruell & ſo fell,
that he killed and deuoured men
going thꝛough ỳ Foꝛreſt. The
Emperour theꝛefoꝛe being right heauy, pꝛo-
claimed thꝛoughout all his Dominions, that
whatſoeuer hee was that could ſlay the Boꝛe,
ſhould haue his onely Daughter to Wife, and
therewith his Empire after his death: and as
this was in all places pꝛoclaimed, there was
not one man found that durſt giue the aduen-
ture, But there was a Shepheard, who

thought in himselfe, might I ỳ boze ouercome & slay I, should not only aduance my selfe, but also all my generation & kindzed. So then he toke his Sheapheards staffe in his hand, and went to the Fozrest. And as the Boze had of him a sight, he dzew towardst he Heardsman, but he foz feare climed vpon a Trée, and then the Boze began to bite and gnaw the Trée.

So the Heard thought shortly that hee would haue ouerthzowne it. This Trée was loaden with great plenty of fruit, & the heard gathered & plucked therof, and cast them to the Boze insomuch that when he was filled therewith, he layed him downe to slæpe: the which when the

the heard perceiued, by little & little descended the Tree, and with ẏ one hand he clawed the Boze, and with ẏ other held himselfe vpon the tree, and seeing ẏ the Boze slept very soundly, he drew out his knife and smote ẏ Boze to the heart and killed him: and so shortly after hee wedded the Emperours Daughter, and after ẏ death of her Father, he was made Emperor. Then said shee, My Lord wot ye not what I haue said? he sayd right well. Thē said she, this mighty Boze betokeneth your most noble person against whom may no man withstand neither by wisedome, nor with strength. This Sheapheard with his staffe, is the person of your vngratious Son, who with his staffe of cunning beginneth to play with you as the Beardsman clawed the Boze, and made him to sleep, & after killed him: in the same manner ẏ Masters of your Son by their false fables & narrations claw you and glose with you, vntil the time that your Son slay you, that he may raigne. Then said the Emperour, God forbid that they should doe to me as he did to the wild Boze, and sayd vnto her, this day my Sonne shall die: and she answered, if ye doe so, then doe you wisely. Then the Emperour the second time sitting in Judgment, commanded to lead him to the place of Execution appointed

ted for that purpose: and whilst he was going the second Maister came before the Emperour doing him great reuerence, as before he shew in the comming of the first master, to whō the second master said, O my Lord, & Emperour if you should so slay your son for the words of your wife, it shall happen worse to you, then did to a certaine Knight, which for the words of his wife was vniustly put vpon the pillory. The Emperour sayd, O good Maister tell me how that happened: & he sayd my Lord I shall not say it, vnles you will call your onely Son from the death vntill the time that the Example be told, the which if it turne not you from your purpose, thē your will be fulfilled. Then the Emperour commanded ỳ the Child should bee called againe, and vnder this manner the followeth the second Maister began to tell.

The Example of the second Maister.

IN a city was an ancient knight which wedded a yong wife and a faire, as ye haue done, whō he loued aboue all earthly things. This knight was a very circumspect & carefull Husband, inso-

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much that euery night he locked in the doores with his owne hands, & laid the keyes vnder his beds head. In that Cittie was a Lawe or ſtome, that at a certaine houre in the night bell was vſed to be rung, that after the ring- ng of the ſayd bell, if any man or woman were y watch-men found about ỹ Stræts, al that night they ſhould be kept faſt in a priſon, & on ỹ morrow ſet faſt vpon a Pillorie that all ỹ peo- le might behold and wonder at them.

This foreſaid knight had little mind or luſt of fleſhly dæds, for that he was very old, and might not ſatiate or performe the deſires and appetites of his yong Wife: wherefore eue- ry night ſhe (hauing a Paramour, her huſband ſlæping) toke the keyes frō vnder his beds head & went to her loue, & whē ſhe came againe, al priuily ſhe laid ỹ keyes vnder her Yusbands head, and thus plaied ſhæ many times.

So it happened vpon a night, that ỹ knight awaked out from his ſlæpe, and miſſed his wife, and alſo the keyes vnder his beds head: whereupon he then aroſe vp & went vnto the doores, and found them open, the which he cloſed and boulted faſt within, and then went vp againe into his Chamber and loked out at the window towards the Stræt: and when it was neere day, about the Third Cockes crow, his

Wife

Wife came from her beſt beloued, and foun
the dwze ſhut & bolted within, thē was ſhe ſo
rowfull, neuertheles ſhe knocked to haue com
in. Then ſpake the knight out of the windowe
O thou moſt wicked & vncleane Wife, now I
know & am expert ỹ many a time ỹ haſt forſa-
ken my bed & gone & done adultery, now thou
ſhalt ſtand vntill the Bell be rung, & that the
Watch-men may take thee, & do wt thee accor-
ding to ỹ Law. His wife anſwered, my Lord,
wherfore do ye lay ỹ to me, for in very troth ỹ
cauſe of my being abroad was for no euill, but
I was called by my Mothers maid, & fetched
in the night, & whē I ſaw you ſlep ſo ſwētly,
I durſt not awake you becauſe that ye are old
& therefore I toke the keyes and went to my
Mother, the which is ſore ſick, that I feare to
morrow ſhe muſt bee annoynted or anneyled:
notwithſtanding, for becauſe that I would not
you offend, I haue haſted me againe vnto you
and haue left her lying in great paine & infir-
mity, therfore I pray you for the loue of God
let me in before the Bell ringeth. The Knight
anſwered, ye ſhal not ſo come in, ye muſt there
abide vntill the time that the Bell ringeth, &
vntill that the watchmen come and take you
then ſaid, ſhe that ſhould be to you, and to me
and vnto all our friends and kindred a great

shame and rebuke, therfore for the reuerence
of almighty God let me come in: then said he;
haue in thy mind euill and false wife, how of-
entimes thou hast forsaken my bed and done
adultery, it is much better that you suffer
shame, and bewayle for thy sins here in this
World, then for to suffer payne in hell. She
said againe to him, I pray you for the loue of
him that was crucified, & died on the Crosse,
haue mercy on me: The Knight sayd, thou
labourest in vayne, for thou shalt not come in,
but thou shalt tarry the rōning of the watch-
men. She hearing that, said: My Lord, you
know that by this doore standeth a Well, if
ye let me not come in, I shall therin drowne
my selfe, rather then all my friends should be
shamed for me: then said he, would God that
thou hadst bēen drowned long before that euer
thou camest in my bed. As they thus spake to-
gether, the Moone went downe & all was be-
ry dark, then said she, if it will not other-wise
be, I shall drowne my selfe, but yet before, like
a true christian woman, I will make my te-
stament. First, I bequeath to God my soule,
and my Body to bee buried in the Church of
St. Peter: and of all other things and goods
that God hath sent me, I giue vnto you to dis-
pose for my Soule, after your wisedome and

discretion

discretion. And when shée had thus said, sh
went vnto the Well, and there lying a great
Stone, with both her armes shee lifted it vp
and said now I drowne my selfe, and so cast

Stone downe into the well, and went againe
priuily & stood by the dooze: The knight hea-
ring the noise, cried with a loud voice, saying
Alas, alas, my sweet wife is drowned, and so
he hastily came downe and ran to the Well,
& when shee saw that the dooze was open, pre-
sently shee entred in and locked the dooze, and
went vp into the chamber, and lay and looked
out of the Windowe: the Knight stood by the
Well, and cried and wept bitterly, and said
wife

wo be to me, I haue now lost my best beloued wife, now cursed be the time that I made fast the doze against her: when the Lady heard that shee sayd O thou cursed old Greysard, why standest thou there at this time of the night, was not my body to you sufficient, wherefoze doe you thus goe euery night to your harlots, and your whozes, and leaue my bed: As hée heard the voyce of his wife, he was right glad, and sayd, blessed bée God that yet shee is not dzowned: But my good Lady, wherefoze doe you lay such things against mée, I thought to haue chastised you, and therfoze I locked fast the doze, but in no wise I intended it to your perill, ye know well what sozrow I made foz you, when I heard you to haue fallen into the Well, and therefoze I came thinking to haue holpen you. Whereupon shée said, thou lyest falsly, I neuer committed such faults as thou layest to mee, but it appeareth by a common Pzouerbe, he that is guilty oz culpable himselfe in a sin, he iudgeth euery man to bée in the same, oz else the Father neuer sought his Son in the Ouen, except he had bæn therein himselfe: In like case conceiuest thou a false surmise of mée, but one thing I pzomise thée, thou shalt abide there vntill ỹ watch-men do come, and the bell be rung, that they may lead

thée

thee before the Iudges to abide and suffer the Law. Then said the Knight, wherfore lay ye such things to me that am old, ympotent and most vnmeet to delight in such game? I haue dwelt long in this City and neuer was defamed, and therfore let me in, that to me or to your selfe ye do no shame. She said, ye speake in vayne, it is better that ye forethinke your sinnes in this world, then in Hell, haue in mind what the wise man saith, a poore man Proud, a rich man a Lyar, and an Old man a fole, God healeth: So be you a fole & rich, what need was it for you to slaunder me, and cannot be content when as ye haue the flower of my youth at your pleasure, but yet runnest to Harlots, and therfore it is the great grace of God, that you haue time and space to forethinke it, least ye should perish & be damned for more sinnes, and therfore suffer your pennance patiently. The knight said, O my best beloued Lady, although it be so, yet is God mercifull, and he asketh nothing of a sinner, but that he amend his life, & forethinke himselfe, and do pennance for his sins. Now let me come in & I will make amends, she sayd, what diuel hath made you so good a preacher, but so come you not in: & as they thus spake, the bell rang, and then he entreated very fer-

uently,

uently, saying, now suffer mée to come in that I bée not ashamed for euer: she answered, the ringing of the Bell doth pretend the health of your soule. And as this was sayd, then presently came the Watch-men about the City, and found the knight standing in the Street, & said to him, O good man, it is not good that ye stand héere in this houre of the night. As shee heard the voyce of the Watch-men, shée sayd: God fellowes venge mée on that old accursed Whore-hunter, for ye know whose Daughter I am: This cursed old man is wont euery night to leaue my Bed, and go to his Whores and Harlots, I haue a long time forborne him and would not shew it, nor complaine on him to my friends, for I trusted that he would haue amended this misrule, and it helpeth not: and therfore take him & punish him after the Law, that all such old doters may take example by him. Then the Watch-men toke him, and all night chastised him in Prison, and on the morrow they put him on the Pillory. Now saith the Maister to the Emperour, Lord, haue you vnderstood what I haue said, and he sayd, right well. Then sayd the Maister, if you put to death your Sonne by the instigation of your Wife, it shall chance vnto you worse than to the Knight.

The Emperour said, she was the worst woman that euer I heard of, that so falsly brought her Husband to shame and rebuke: I say vnto you master, that for the reason of this example my sonne shall not die this day. The Master said vnto him, if you do so then ye doe wisely and that hereafter you shall ioy: so I commit you to God, & thanke you of your patient hearing, and for the sparing of your Sonne, and so he departed.

The third complaint of the Empresse, more full of cunning and dissembling sorrow, then the former.

WHen the Empresse heard that the Child was not dead, shee wept bitterly, and entered hinto her priuy Champer, and tare her skin with her nailes, and with a loud voyce cryed, alas that euer I was borne, that I so great a Kings Daughter should thus be entreated and shamed, and thereof can haue no remedy: her Gentlewomen hearing this, went & shewed it to the Emperor, and he went vnto her and com-

comforted her, saying: O Lady, weepe not so, ne cry not, for it becometh you not. Who answered the loue that I haue and owe vnto you, maketh me more sorrow, then the contempt of the death: for why? the inward loue of your heart hath hitherto prohibited and letted me that I haue not returned again into my countrey, to my Father, but I feare if I shall so doe, it might turne you to harme, for hee is mighty to honour me with riches, and to reuenge my quarrell and despight in such wise that you might repent it. Whereto said the Emperor, let that passe out of your mind, neither repeat it any more, for as long as I liue I shall neuer fails you. And she said, Lord, I pray God that he may long liue, but I feare mee that it shall happen to you as it befell to a Knight and his Sonne that would not bury his Fathers head in the Church-yard, and yet his father was slaine for him: then said the Emperour shew me that example, how it was that he would not bury his Fathers head: she said I shall doe it to your profit.

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The third Example of the Empresse.

IN the Citty of Rome there was a knight which had two Daughters and one Sonne. And this Knight had so great delight in Hunting, Justing, and Tourney, that all things that he might win and get, he laid it and spent it thereupon. In that time liued the Emperor named Octavian; which in his riches of gold and siluer, exceeded all other Knights & Princes, insomuch that he had a Tower full of gold, and ordained a Knight to haue the kæping and charge thereof. This knight that so haunted Justing and other idle games, came to so great pouerty, that he was forced out of the extreamity of his aduerse Fortunes to sell his heritage, and called to him his Sonne and said, My Sonne, it behoueth me of your Counsell, for necessity and pouerty compelleth me to sell mine Heritage; or else to find some other way whereby I may liue: for if I should sell mine heritage, both you and your sisters should perish. Then the Son sayd, Father, if yee can find any manner of meanes without selling of your Heritage, I

should

should be ready to helpe you. The Father sayd, I haue thought on a good counsell, The Emperour hath a great Tower full of Gold, by night time let vs goe thither with Instruments, and digge and hew through the Tower, and let vs take of the Gold as much as shall suffice vs. Whereunto the Sonne answered & sayd, that Counsell cannot be amended, for it is better of the Emperours Gold to take, (to helpe vs) than to sell our Heritage.

So they arose vp both in the night, and went to the Tower, & with instruments they made a hole through the Wall, and toke as much

Gould as they both could carry away at that time, & the Knight payd his debts, and haunted againe Iusts, as he did before, vntill all was spent and consumed. In the meane while the kæper of the Treasure went into the Tower, and when he saw the Treasure, stollen, and a great hole made through the wall, he began to ware sore affraid, & went vnto the Emperour and shewed how it was befallen· to whome the Emperour sayd all angrie, what nædest thou to shew that. haue I not deliuered to thæ my Treasure, & therfore of thæ I will aske it: anon as the kæper heard that, he went to the Tower againe, and set afore the hole a great vessell full of Pitch, medled with other gins so subtilly, that no man might come in at that hole, , but he must needs fall into that vessell, and if he had therein fell, he could no more com out of it. Not long after the Knight had all the Gold consumed & spent, and went againe with his sonne to the Tower, to steale more Gold. And as the Father went in first anon hee was fallen into the Vessell full of Pitch to the necke, and when he saw that hée was taken and could not get out, he said to his Sonne, follow me not, for if thou doest, thou canst not escape by any meanes: Then said the Sonne God defend that I should not helpe

you

you: for if you are found, wée are al but dead, and if that yée may not be holpen by me, I shal séeke counsaile how that you may bee deliuered and holpen The Father said, there is noue other counsaile but with thy sword smite off my head, and as my body is found without an head, no man shall know me, and so thou and my Daugters may scape & auoyd this worldly shame and death. The Sonne said, Father, ye haue giuen the best counsell: for if it were so that any man might perceiue any knowledge of you, none of vs should escape that death, and it is expedient that your head be smitten off: anon he drew out his Sword and smote of his Fathers head and cast it into a Pit, and then went and shewed vnto his Sisters all the matter, who many dayes after priuily bewayled the death of their Father. After this, the kéepper of the Treasure came into the Tower, and found a body without a head, wherat hee wondred sore, and shewed it to the Emperour: to whom he said bind that body at the taile of an Horse, and so draw it through all the stréets of the Citty, and diligently take géed héed if ye heare any cry, or weeping: whereseoeuer yee heare that, hee is Lord of the House, take all them, and the Body, draw them to the Gallowes and hang them. The which the Empe-

rours seruants fulfilled according to his commaundement, and as they came against the house of the dead Knight, the Daughters seeing the body of their dead father, made a marvailous great shrike, and wept pitteously, and as their Brother heard that, anon hee wounded himselfe with a Knife, so that great plentie of blood came out of the wound. The Officers when they heard the cry, entred into the house, demanding the cause of their clamour, then answerd the Sonne, they lament because I am thus wounded: for when my sisters saw my blood so abundantly go out as you see, they began to weep and cry: and when the Officers saw the wound, they beleeued his words and so deceiued, went their waies & hung the Knights body vpon the Gallows where he hung a long time, and his Son would neither take his body downe from the Gallowes, nor yet bury his head. The Empresse said, vnderstand ye what I haue said? The Emperour said, right well.

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The declaration of the Example.

THen spake the Empresse thus, My Lord, I feare it will so chance to you and to your Son. This knight for the loue of his Son was made pore, & first hee committed theft, and brake the Tower, Secondly, caused himselfe to be beaded that his children should haue no shame, fter the sonne cast the head into a Dike, and uried it not, neither in Church nor Churchard, and his body he suffered to hang still vpon the gallows: If that he could not haue taen it downe in the day, hee might well haue one it in the night: in the same manner ye laour night and day, that ye may promote your on to honour and riches, but without doubt e laboureth for your confusion and destructin, that he may raigne after you in your Emire. Therefore I aduise you that you spédily ake away his life, who liuing, would sudderly proue the destruction of yours, the Emperor id, you haue shewed mee a good Example The Knights Sonne when hee had smitten of s Fathers Head, would not bury it: without

doub

doubt my Sonne shall not do so by me, but he anon commanded his Officers that they should leade him to the Gallowes, and they all obeyed his Commandement hastily: as they led him through the Streets, the people made great noyse and lamentation, crying alas, alas, the onely Son of the Emperour is led againe towards the Gallowes: and as they led him the Third Maister named Craton, came riding vpon a Horse and as the Child saw him, he did bow downe his head to him, as though he had said haue mind vpon mee: the people cryed, saying, O good Master hast you and saue your Disciple: and so he smote his horse with his Spurres, and hasted him to the Pallace. And when he came before the Emperor, he honorably saluted him who said, thy comming hither shall nothing availe thée, for I thinke it long vntill I be reuenged of thée. The Master said I hoped at my comming to haue bèn welcome and to haue had a better reward, & not so to be rebuked. The Emperour said as ye haue deserued, so it shall be to you. To whom he sayd O Lord, what haue I deserued? The Emperour sayd, yee right well deserue death, for I liuered you my Sonne well speaking, and well mannered· for to bee informed & taught ye haue deliuered him againe vnto me dum

and

nd a Kibaud. To whom the Maister sayde, n that you say he is dumbe, that I commit to ood, For he maketh the dumbe to speake, and he deafe to heare- But in that you say hee ould haue enforced your wife, that would I adly know, if any creature haue seene that, r there is no malice aboue the malice of a wo- an, and that shall I proue by a good Exam- le, that a Woman is full of falshood and vn- nowne deceits, and if you put to death your onne for the words of your Wife, it shall appen vnto you, as it did to a Noble Man, of is Wife and his Vie, the which he loued mar- aillously. To whome the Emperour sayd, I ray you tell me, how that women are full malice and leasings: who said I will not he , but if you will first call againe your S ou the death, then at your pleasure I sh hew the Example. Then the Emperour non made his Sonne to be called againe, and to be put in prison. Then the Maister began to tell the Ex- ample in this manner and forme fol- lowing.

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The Example of the third Maister.

THere was in a Citty a rich Burgesse that had a Pie, the which he loued so well, that euery day hee taught her to speake Latine and Hebrew: and when she had learned very perfectly to speake those two Languages, all that she saw & heard she shewed and told her Master.

This yong man had a faire young Wife as haue, the which he loued much, but she on the con-

contrary loued him not, because he was not of that lasciuious performance for to answer her lusts according to the height of her desires, and therefore she had another faire yong man that she loued aboue her Husband, and alwaies as her Husband was out of the Towne about his Marchandize and other businesse, she sent for her best beloued, that they might make good chære together. The Pie as shee espied that, told it to her maister at his comming home, in such wise as the noise thereof ran all ouer the Citty of her Adultery, wherefore her Husband many times brabled and chid with her: she answered him ye beléeue your cursed Pie, which as long as she liueth, shall alwaies make betwixt vs variance and discord: and he said that Pie cannot lie, for what she séeth and heareth, that shee telleth me, and therefore I beleeue her more then you, It fortuned that this man went into a farr Country about his Merchandize, and as soone as hee was gone, his Wife sent for her friend and loue to solace and make good chære with him: but he durst not come by day light, but abode vntill the Euening, least that he should be marked & seene of the people: and when the night was come then he knocked at the Gate, and she was ready and opened it and said, goe in fréely, for no man shall sée you,

and

and he said, I feare me that the cursed pie shall accuse vs, for by her is come great slaunder vppon vs through all the Citty; enter in she sayd boldly and feare not, and as they should passe through the Hall where the Pie was in her cage, she heard him say these words, O my most beloved, I feare me greatly least that the pie should bewray vs. And as the wife heard that, she said, be still fole, it is darke she may not see you. Then the pie hearing that, said, if I see thee not, I heare thy voice, & thou dost wrong to my master, for thou sleepest with my Mistresse, and when my master commeth I shall tell him. The young man hearing that, said, tould I not you that the pie would discouer vs? And the wife said, feare not, for this night we will be auenged on the pie, and so they entred into the Chamber, and slept together that night. About midnight the Wife arose and called her maid and said, fetch me a Ladder and set it vp to the roofe of the House, that I may wreake me of the pie: the Maid did euen so, and they went vp both and made a hole through the couering of the house, right ouer the pie, and there through cast sand, clay, stones, and water vpon the pie, insomuch that the poore pie was neere dead: and on the morrow the yong man went early out at the back-

doze. And when the good man was come home, as his custome was, hee went and visited the pie, and said to her, O pie my beloued Bird tell me how thou hast fared the whiles that I haue bene out? She said Master, I shall tell you tidings that I haue heard; your Wife as sone as you were gone, by the night time shée let a man come in, & as sone as I heard that, I told him that I would shew it to you at your comming home, yet notwithstanding she led him into your Chamber, and slept with him all night: you asked mee also how that I haue done in your absence, and I say to you of a troth, that I neuer was so nigh my death as I was that same night with snow, Haile, and raine that fell vpon me so long together, that I was almost left for dead. The Wife when she heard that sayd to her Husband, Sir you beléeue your pie, now you may heare what shée saith, she complaineth that in the same night there fell so much snow, haile, and raine vpon her that shée was almost dead; and yet there was none of all them that same night, for there was not in a yéere a fairer, nor a clérer night then it was, and therefore from henceforth beléeue her not. Then went the good man to his neighbours, and asked of them, if that night were any tempest or raine: they answered, that

that some of them had waked all that night, and in all ỹ yeere they had not sæne a fairer night: then went he to his house, and said to his wife, I haue found you in the truth, for the night was very faire and cleare, as I vnderstand of your neighbours. You may now know of a truth, said she, that the Pie is a lyar with her leasings she hath sowne and made much discord betwixt vs, and moreouer I am defamed through the Citty by her false leasings. Then the Burgesse went vnto the Pie and said, wherefore hast thou made lyes and false tales betwixt me and my Wife, is this the thanke that I haue for the meat that I was wont to giue thee with my owne hands euery day, and thou hast also therby brought my wife into great defamation and disgrace through all the Towne? The Pie answered, God knoweth I cannot lie, for that which I saw and heard haue I shewed vnto you then sayd he, thou lyest, hast thou not said vnto me, that in the same night was Haile, & Snow and Raine, that thou haddest nære hand lost thy life, which is most false: And therefore from henceforth thou shalt make no more leasings nor discord betwixt me and my wife, and so tooke ỹ Pie and brake her necke.

When as the Wife saw that, she was glad and said, now haue you done well, now may

lye all our daies liue in rest and peace. And when he had slaine the Pie. he looked vp and saw in the top of the house a Ladder, and a vessell with water, sand, and stones, then as he beheld that, he perceiued the falshood of his wife, and cryed with a loud voice, woe be to me, that for my Wiues words I haue slaine my Pie, and also my solace and ioy lost, the which in all things said to me troth, And ashee had thus done, anon for sorrow he left his Marchandize, and all his house, and went towards the Holy Land, and neuer turned againe towardes his Wife. Then the Maister said to the Emperour, Sir, you haue vnderstood what I sayd: he answered, right well; the Maister said, was not that a false and cursed Wife, that so by her falshood, deceit, and cunning, caused the Pie to be slaine? The Emperour sayd, in troth shee was full of falseneſſe, it pitieth me greatly to thinke vpon the Pie, the which for her true saying, lost her life. Verily I say vnto you, that you haue told me a very faire Example, therefore this day my Sonne shall not Die.

Then said the Master, Sir, you do wisely, and I thanke you that you haue spared your Sonne this day for my sake, and so to God I commend you.

The fourth Complaint of the Empresse.

When the Empresse heard that the Childe was not dead, shee made great noyse and crying, in such wise that she was heard through the Pallace, and sayd wo be vnto me that euer I was made Empresse, would to God that I had died when I was First brought into these partes: when the Emperour heard the voice, and cry that shee made, hee entred into the Chamber, and comforted her as much as he could, and demaunded the cause of her lamentation, who said, O mine owne Lord, haue you no wonder though that I bee in this sorrow and agonie, for I am your wife, and in your companie by your Sonne I am ashamed, and ye saw lately the bloody markes of his enforcement vpon my tender flesh, and you haue promised me that he therefore should be hanged, and yet hee liueth, wherefore should I not be sorry? the Emperour answered, bee content and pleased, and I shall doe iustice vppon my Sonne to morrow, but that I forbare him yesterday, was at the mouing of one of his Masters by an example,

then said shée, haue ye forbid to doe iustice for one worde: were it so, yet for a worlde ye should not let to doe iustice, and ye say for the example of one Master, you haue left it. I feare me it shall happen to you, and with your masters as vppon a time it fortuned to an Emperour with his Seauen wise Maisters, The Emperour sayd, I pray you tell mee that example. Shee said, to what intent should I labour in vaine: for yesterday I shewed you a good example, and it auailed not, and whatsoeuer I shew for your honour and profit, that the Masters of your Son turne vp and downe to your destruction, as in this present example I shall cléerelie shew you: To whom the Emperour said, O my best beloued Ladie, tell mee that example, that by the same I may the better beware: for though through my clemency, I gaue one daies benefit of life to my Son, I shall not therefore giue him his life, for that which is deferred is not therefore forgiuen; and shee said gladly I shall shew it to you for your profit, & began to tell it as hereafter followeth.

The fourth Example of the Empresse.

SOmetime there was in the Citie of Rome seuen wise masters by whom all the Empire was gouerned and ruled, and the Emperour that then was, did neuer attempt any thing without the counsell of the Maisters: Whereupon they (perceiuing that the Emperour was so affected and enclined to them, that without them hee would not ordaine or doe any thing) deuised by their Art and Cunning, that the Emperour should cléereiy sée as long as he was in the Pallace, but as soone as he was out of the Pallace he should become blinde: and that did they, to the intent that they might the more freely haue the dealing themselues of all things that appertained to the Emperour, by the which they got and woon to them great profit and lucre of goods: and after they had made and wrought the experiment, they could neuer change it, ne vndoe it afterward, but the Emperour abode still blind many yeares, And the seauen Maisters made and proclaimed throughout the Empire,

pire, that if any man had dreamed a dreame hée should come vnto them with a Flozen of Gold oz Siluer, and they would expound and declare vnto him the interpretation of his Dreame: whereby, thy other vniust meanes they obtai, ned much moze Substance and Money of the People, then the Emperour did. So vppon a time when he sate at the Table with the Empresse, hée began to sigh & sozrow in himselfe, and when shée perceiued that, shée inquired diligently of him the cause of his heauinesse and dolour: the Emperour sayd, should it not be heauy and sozrowfull vnto mée, that I so long haue béene blind, and cannot sée out of my Pallace, and yet haue and find no remedie? To whome spake the Empresse and said, Lozd, heare my Counsell, and it shall neuer repent you if you do thereafter. In your Court you haue Seuen wise Maisters, by whom ye and all the Empire is gouerned, if you now behold and marke this in your minde, yée shall find that they are the cause of your Blindnesse and disease, and if it be so, they are worthy to dy a most shamefull death therefoze take héed to my Counsell and aduice: first send foz them, and shew to to them your disease and infirmity, and threaten them on paine of their liues, that they should find some spéedy remedy to helpe you of

your sickneſſe and blindneſſe. This counſell pleaſed the Emperour well, and anon he ſent for the Maiſters, and when they were come, the Emperour anon ſhewed vnto him his infirmitie and blindneſſe, and charged them on paine of death, that they ſhould preſently ſéke ſome remedy to eaſe him therof. Then anſwered they yée deſire of vs a thing that is difficult and hard to be done thus ſhortly, but giue vs reſpite for Ten dayes, and then we ſhall giue you our full anſwere. The Emperour was therewith well contented and pleaſed: Then the Seauen wiſe Maiſters went to counſell, how they might reſtore vnto him his ſight againe, & in no manner of wiſe could they finde the meane how to put away the blindnes from the Emperour, wherefore they were all right ſorrowfull, and ſaid among themſelues, without wée find a remedy wée are all but déad mẽ So they went from thence throughout all the Empire, and ſought if they could find any remedy or counſell therfore. It happened them vpon a time going through a Citty, and in the middeſt therof they found Children playing, and after them came a man with a Tallent or Flozen of Gould, and ſaid to them, good Maiſters, this night I haue dreamed a dreame, the interpretation therof I would faine know,

where-

wherefore I pray you ſhew mee what it ſignifieth, and take this Gold to you. That heard one of the Children that played among the other, who ſayd to him giue me the Gold, and then I ſhall expound thy Dreame. The man ſayd, I dreamed this night that in the midſt of my Orchard was a great ſpring of water, whereof came many ſmall Springs, that all mine Orchard was full and ouerflowne with water: the Child ſayd, take a Spade and dig in the ſame place whereas ye thought that the water ſprang out, and there ſhall yee find an hoard of Gold ſo great, that yée and all your Children and Lineage ſhall bée for euer rich: the man did as the child had ſhewed him, and found the Treaſure according to his words. Then went the man to the Child and offered him a pound waight of the Gold that hee had found, for the interpretation of the Dreame, but he would receiue none, but committed him to the prayers of the man. The ſeauen wiſe Maſters, when they heard the Child ſo wiſely expound the Dreame, they ſaid to him, God Child what is your name? He anſwered and ſaid, I am called Marline. Then ſaid the Maſters, we ſée ſurely great wiſedome in you, wée ſhall ſhew vnto you a ſtrange matter, and of that wée would gladly that ye could find a re-

medy. The Child sayd, shew vnto me your matter: and they said, the Emperour of Rome as long as he is in the Pallace, he hath his sight very clere without any impediment, but as sone as he is gone out of the Pallace, he is so blinde that he cannot see. Now, if ye can find out the cause therof, and giue present remedy wherby he may be eased and haue his sight againe, ye shall haue great reward and honour of the Emperour. Then answered the Child, I know as well the cause of his blindnes, as the remedy. Then sayd all vnto him, come with vs to the Emperour and ye shall be rewarded so largely that ye shall be pleased. To whom the Childe sayd, I am ready to goe with you. And when they came with the Child before the Emperour, they said vnto him: Lord, loe here is the Child that we haue brought before you the which shall fulfill your desire touching the cause of your blindnesse, and the recouering of your sight: the Emperour said, good Maisters, will you take it vpon you and abide thereby, that the Childe shall performe this attempt? Then all said yea, for we be expert in his wisedome. The Emperor turned himselfe towards the child and said will ye vndertake to tell me the cause of my blindenesse, and the remedy? The Childe answered and sayd, my Lord the

Em

Emperour, lead me into your Bed-chamber, and there I shall shew you what is to be done: and as he was therein brought, he sayd to the seruants, take off the Clothes off the Bed, & all the apparrell, and ye shall see wonders. And as that was done, they saw a Well smoaking that had seauen Springs or flouds, the which when the Emperour saw, he marualled greatly. The Child said, yee see this Well, and without it be quenched, yee shall neuer haue your

ght, the Emperour said, how may that bee: e Child said, but by one way: the Emperour id, shew Us then the meane, and if it be pos-

sible

sible to me, it shal be done, that I may recouer
againe my sight, as well without as within.
To whom the child sayd, my Lord, the seuen
Springs of this Well, are these seauen wise
Maisters, who hitherto haue traiterously go-
uerned you and your Empire, and haue made
yee blind as yee be without your Pallace, that
they your Subiects by extortion might pill &
polle, ye not seeing it. But now they know
not the remedy, therefore heare you now my
counsaile, and this Well shall be qhenched and
extinct: strike off the first Maisters head, and
anon ye shall the first spring quench, and so by
order one after another, till that they are all
beheaded, and anon all the Springs with the
Well, shall be vanished and gone away, and ye
shall haue againe your sight as yee had before:
and when this was done and fulfilled, the
Well with Seauen Springs was vanished.
And as the Emperour had his sight againe,
he made the child a great Lord, and gaue him
great abundance of goods: and after spake the
Empresse, my Lord, haue ye well perceiued
this example that I haue told you? And he
sayd yea in the best wise, and ye haue receited
a worthy and good example. Then sayd she
in the same manner your Seauen wise Mai-
sters intend to do with you, with their false
narra-

ations, that your Sonne may raigne ouer
r Empire; which God forbid.

The Declaration of the Example.

His Well is your Son, where-
out floweth Seauen Springes,
that ſignifieth the Seauen wiſe
Maiſters, the which Sonne ye
may not deſtroy, without the
ſeauen wiſe Maiſters be made
ble and brought to nought: that done, this
ell that is your Sonne, with all his wyles
all not eſcape, but let him taſte that death
hich beſits his deſerts, which are ſhamefull,
aſt he haue helpe of his Maiſters; and after
nſequently the Seauen Maiſters; and ſo you
all Gouerne and guide your Empire in reſt
d peace. The Emperour anon commanded
s Seruants to lead his Sonne to the Gal-
wes, which they were loath to doe. So was
ere then a great Multitude of people gathe-
d with great noiſe and bewayling. ſo that
e noiſe came to the eare of the Fourth Mai-
er named Malquidrake, the which leapt vpon
s horſe, & haſted him to the Pallace, where

he

he met with his disciple, and did reuerence
him, and commended him vnto him: and wh
he came before the Emperour and had don
obeysance and reuerence as appertained, t
Emperour then answered and said, Litt
thanks shall you haue you old cursed Caitiff
for so ill teaching my Sonne. I deliuered y
my Sonne well speaking and in all thing
right vertuous, but you haue sent him home
fole, dumbe, and a Ribaud, for he would ha
latne with my Wife by force, and therfore
ye forthwith together with him shall be han
ged. Then said hy Maister, my Lord, I ha
not deserued so ill of you, God knoweth wh
your Sonne spaketh not, in short time y
shall perceiue other things, but the time is n
yet come: but in that you say hee would ha
oppressed your Wife, that is not truth n
proued, neither for one single Person shou
you iudge your Sonne to death. If now
the wordes of your Wife ye iudge your Son
to die, it will be worse to you, than to a certa
auld man and his Wife, and that I shall w
proue. To whom the Emperour said, think
you do with mee as sometime seuen wise m
did to an Emperour Wherunto said the Ma
ster, the offence and trespasse of one, or yet
twenty, may not sound to the rebuke & blam

al other, but one thing of a troth I shal shew
, that euill shall come to you if ye this day
your Sonne to death for the words of your
fe, of the which I could shew a notable Ex-
ple. Then said the Emperour, will ye receit
t for our learning: the Maister sayd, if yee
ll call againe your Sonne from death, then
ll I rehearse the Example, or else not. The
perour commanded that he should be called
ine, and hee desired the Maister to say, as
reafter followeth.

The Example of the Fourth Maister.

THere was an old Knight (and a right wise man) that liu'd long without Wife or Child. His friends came to him oftentimes and counsailed & exhorted him that he should take a Wife.

The Knight thus counsailed, and stirred by s friends so oftentimes, at the last he agreed them, and they gaue him to wife the daugh- of ỹ Prouost of ROME, that was rich, and comely grace and feature, whome when he d seene, anon he was made blind and taken

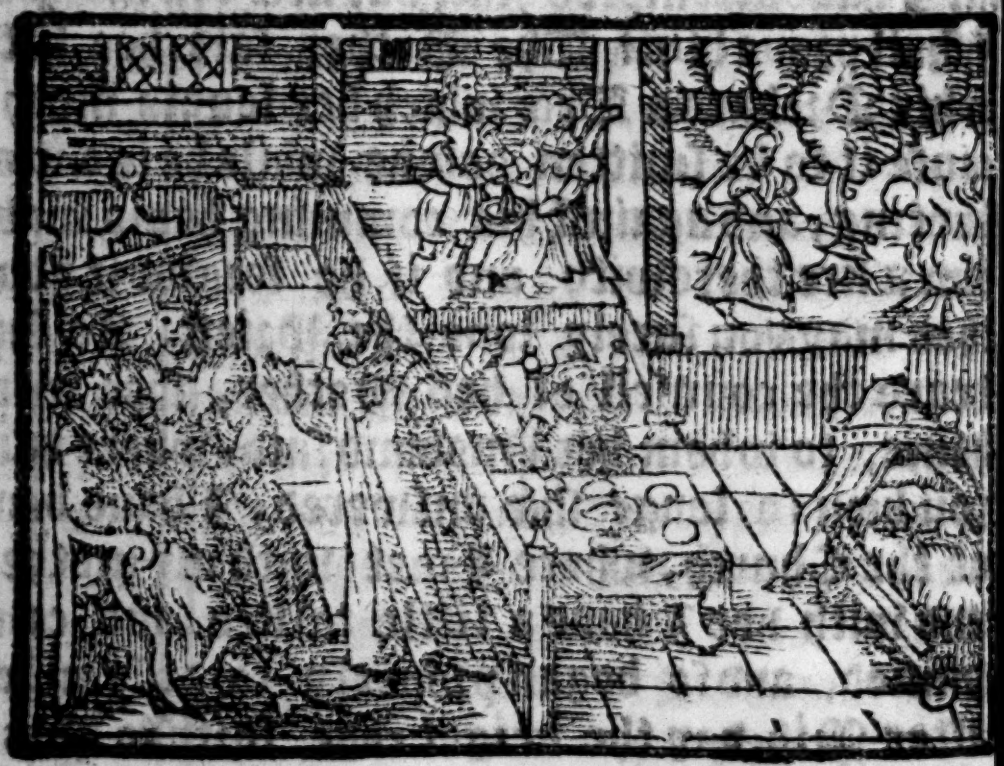
in

in her lsue, and began to loue her marualo
well: and when they had bæne married a
faine space together, and had no childe, b
a time in a morning it happened that she w
to the Church, where she met with her mo
who said, my Daughter, how pleaseth
your Marriage, and your Husband? she
right euill, for yee haue giuen to mee an
lame man to my discontentment in all resp
& I would you had the same time buried m
for I had rather lie and eate with a Swi
then with him, and therefore I may no lon
thus indure, but I must nœds loue anothe
then said the mother, God forbid that my d
Daughter, how long time haue I bæne w
your Father, and yet neuer hither hau
medled with such foolishnesse? The Daugh
said, it is no maruaile, for you both met
your youth together, and the one toke solac
the other, but I can of him receiue no mam
of corporall pleasure for hee is cold, and on
bed he lieth as still as a stone, or as a thing i
moueable. The Mother answered, if you l
another tell me what he is: The Daugh
said, I will loue a Priest. To whom the M
ther said, it were better and lesse sin for you
loue a Knight, or a Squior, in short time
would be weary of me, & after that hee wo

doe me shame, and so will not the Priest for he will hold and kéep his owne honuor and counsell, as well as mine, also spirituall men bee more true to their louers then secular men be: the mother said, heare my counsell, and it will bée good for you, old folkes are wily, and sell, tempt your Husband first, and if ye escape him without doing you harme, or smiting, then loue the Priest. The daughter sayd, I may not so long abide. The Mother sayd vpon my blessing abide till ye haue proued: The Daughter said, vppon your blessing I will abide so long till I haue attempted him, but first tell me how I shall proue him? The Mother said, hee hath in his Orchard a Tree which hee loueth much, cause it to be smitten downe while he is out at hunting, and against his comming home make him a fire therewith, and if he forgiue it you, then may you surely loue the Priest. As shee heard the counsell of her Mother, shee went home, to whom her Husband said, where haue you béen so long? shée answered, I haue béene at the Church, where I met with my mother, and with her I haue a little talked and communed, and so began properly to dissemble: after Mid-day the knight rode forth to Hunt, then she thinking vpon the counsell of her mother, went to the Gardiner, and said to him,

cut

cut down this yong Tree newly Planted, that I may make a fire thereof to warme my Lord withall at his comming from hunting, for it is a great winde and right sharp cold. The Gardiner said, Madam that I will not doe, for my Lord loueth this Tree better than he doth all the other Trees, neuertheles I shall well help you to gather wood enough for to make a good fire but in any case this I will not hew down. As shee heard that, then boldly shee tooke the Axe from the Gardiner and hewed downe the Tree her selfe, and made the Gardiner with



other to beare it home. At euening when her Lord came from hunting, hee was very cold and

and she made a great Fire, and went and met with him, and set him a stoole before the fire to warme him, and as he a little while had sitten, he perceiued the odour of the fire, and called to him the Gardiner and sayd, I feele by this odour, that the new plant burneth in the Fire. The Gardiner sayd, Lord it is true, my Lady your Wife hath felled it downe. The Knight saide vnto her, God forbid that my plant should be cut downe by you; she answered anon and said, Lord I haue done it, knowing the weather cold, and you also cold, and therfore I haue ordained this fire for your comfort: and as the Knight heard that, he loked angerly vpon her and said, O cursed woman, how wast thou so obdurate, relentlesse, and void of pitty, as to hew downe so gentle a young Tree, the which thou knowest wel that I loued aboue al my other Trees? When he had so said, shee began to weepe and excuse her selfe and said my Lord, I haue done it for your good, and do you take it so grieuously, and began to cry woe, woe be to me! Anon as the Knight saw the weeping and teares of his Wife, and heard the cause, he was moued with pittie and said to her, cease off your weeping, and beware how that ye doe anger me any more, or trouble me in any thing that I loue. The next day early in the morning

shée went againe to the Church-yard, and met with her Mother comming home, and they saluted each other. Then the Daughter said to the Mother, O deare Mother I will loue the Priest, for I haue atempted my Lord, as yée counsailed mée, but all for nought, for he anon forgaue it when he saw me a little wæp. Then sayd the Mother, though old men for one time forgiue, they double the paine another time, & therefore I counsaile you, that you yet once againe attempt him. Then said the daughter, I may no longer abide, for I suffer much pain for the loue of the Priest, that with my tongue I cannot tell it, therefore ye shall pardon me I will no more follow or doe after your counsell: then said the Mother, for the loue that the Childe should haue vnto the Mother, attempt him yet once more for your Fathers blessing, & then if ye goe quickly without any harme or beating, loue the Preist, in the name of God. Then answered the Daughter, it is to mee great paine so long time to abide, neuertheles for the blessing of my Father I shal once more attempt him, but tell me how I shall beginne: the mother sayd I vnderstand that hée hath a little Hound that he loueth well, & kæpeth his bed, cast the hound with so great might before his face against the Wall, that it dy, and if yæ

escape

rscape without a stripe, or that he forgiue you it lightly, then in the name of God, loue the Priest. Then the Daughter said, I shall in all thinges doe after your counsell, for there is no Daughter liuing at this day, that would more gladly haue the blessing of the Father and mother then I, and so shee bad her mother farewell, and went to her house againe, and that day with great importunity and trouble of her heart, shee brought to the night, and when the night was come, she commanded the bed to be couered with purple and cloth of gold, whilest the Knight sate by the fire: and when the Bed was made thus ready, the little Hound as hee was accustomed, did leap vpon the Bed, & shee toke him by the hinder legs, and with a wood and malicious heart, she cast him against the Wall, that it lay still dead: when the good old Knight saw that, he was marualiously angry and said with a loud voice to his wife, O thou most cruell and spitefull of all wicked women, how couldest thou finde in thine heart to kill that gentle hound that I loued so much? Lord said shee, haue ye not seene how the hound with his feet (coming out of the mire) hath berayed our Bed that is so precioully couered with rich cloathes? And the Knight sayd with much anger, know you not that I loued much better

my litle Hound then the bed: when she heard that, anon she began pitiously to wæpe, and said, wo be to me that euer I was borne, for al things that I do for the best, it is all turnd into the worst. The knight out of the treasure of his goodnesse and pitty, would not sæffer the wæping and lamentation of his Wife, but for that he loued her so well, he said vnto her, ceasse your wæping, for I forgiue it you altogether: and I counsaile you that yée beware how that ye displeasse mee from henceforth, and so they went to bed together.

Upon the morrow shé arose vp very early, and went to the Church where She met with her mother, to whom when she had done reuerence as it behoued, she said, Mother now will I loue the priest, for I haue attempted my Husband the second time, and all thinges hee hath suffered. The Mother said, O my déere daughter, there is no cruelty or falshood aboue the cruelty of old folkes, and therefore I counsell you that you yet once more proone him, to whom the Daughter answered, mother ye labour in vaine, for yée wist what, and how much paine that I suffer for the Priests loue, ye should rather helpe me, if ye loued mee. The mother said, heare me daughter this one time, and I shall neuer let you more. Thinke how

you haue sucked milke out of my breasts, and the great paine that I suffered for you at your birth. by these paines my deere Daughter, I desire and charge you, that you denie not this good petition, & I promise to God no more to let you, nor hinder you of your intent, but rather to helpe you thereto. Then answered the Daughter, it is to my great paine to abstaine mee, and to forbeare my selfe so long from the ioue of the Priest. Neuertheless for the great charge that ye haue laid to mee, & also for that ye haue made a vow no more to let mee, but to further me, tell me how I shall attempt him & I shall once more giue the aduenture. The Mother sayd, I know well that on Sonday next comming hee intendeth to haue vs all at dinner, and there shall be your Father and I, & all our friends, with all the best of the Cittie; and when you are set in your place, & all the Meates are brought and serued vppon the Table fasten on your keyes priuily that hang at your Girdle, in the Table-cloth, and then doe you faine to haue forgotten your Knife, and say these words openly: See what a short wit I am off, I haue forgotten my knife in my Chamber & then rise vp hastily, and goe, and the Cloath with all the meates you shall casse downe and ouerthrow vpon the ground: and if

yée escape without paine, I make a vow to God, that I shall neuer let you after. The Daughter sayd, that shall I gladly doe, and so toke her leaue and departed. The Feast daie came, and all as the mother said was bidden, the seruants made ready & couered the Table, all were set at the Table, and the daughter sat ouer against her Lord: and when the Table was well serued with meats and other things therto belonging, the Lady of the house sayd with a loud voice, See how forgetfull I am, I haue left my knife in my Chamber, which I must fetch, and so rose vp hastily. and drew the Cloth with all the meat vpon it with her, and all the Gold Vessels, and Sauits fell vpon the ground: the knight wared sore angry in heart, but he for shame dissembled before his guests, and commaunded another cleane Cloath, and other meates to be brought, and with ioy and mirth he saluted his Guests to eate and make good cheare, that by him they were all made merry. The feast or Dinner done, they gaue all thankes to the knight, and tooke their leaues and departed euery man towardes his owne house. Vpon the next day in the morning the knight arose earlie and went to the Church, and heard Seruice, and after which he went to a Barbour, and said vnto him, Sir, are you ex-

pert

pert in blod-letting, in what baine that I will desire you? he said, Sir, I am expert in what baine that ye can name in a mans body. The knight said, I am well content, come with me, and when he was come to his house, he entred into his Chamber where his wife lay in Bed, & said vnto her, rise vp shortly, then said shee, what shall I doe vp so earlie, it is not yet nine of the Clocke? The knight said, you must rise vp, for you must be letten blod on both your armes: she said, I was neuer letten blod, and shall I now bléed? Then said the Knight, that is troth, and therefore ye are a foole: Remember ye not that first ye hewed down my Trée, and another time ye killed my little Hound, & yesterday ye shamed me before all my friends and parents, and the Fourth is, if that I should suffer you thus to go on, ye should for euer confound and shame mée. The cause héereof I consider, that ye haue euill and wild blod within your body, and therfore I will that the corrupt blood shall be drawne out, that yée from hencefoorth shall put me no more to shame and anger, and so he caused to be made a great fire and she stood and cried, and held vp her hands toward Heauen, and said my, Lord forgiue this trespasse, and haue pittie vpon me at this time, and I shall neuer more offend you. The

Knight said, pray for no mercy, for the mercy that God hath wrought towardes thée at this present, is this, that except thou holdest out thine arme straight, I shall soon haue thy hart blood: and he said also to the Barbour, smite hard, & make a dæpe hole in her arme, or else I shall giue you a great stripe; then smote the Barbour so sore that the blood came abundantly out, and the Knight would not suffer him to stanch it vntill the time that shée changed her colour in her visage, and as this was done, hée bad it to be stopped, and willed the Barbour to smite the vaine vpon the other arme, then she cried with a very loud voyce, My sweet Husband, I pray you haue compassion vpon me, for now I die: The knight answered, Wife, you should haue thought vpon this before ere you had done to me these Thée euill torments or despights: then shée held out her left arme and the Barbor smote therin a great hole, that the blood came out right vgly, and hée suffered her to bléed vntil the time that the colour in her visage was changed, and that shée swounded: Then sayd the Knight, now bind her arme and stanch it, and said vnto her now go to bed and study, and thinke hencefoorth how you may amend your life, or else I shal draw the blood of your heart; and as this was done hée gaue the

Barbour

Barbour his reward and then hée went again
onto his owne house and his wife being vnder
the hands of her maidens nigh dead, was led to
her bed; shée bad one of her maidens go to her
Mother in all hast, and say that I desire her to
come speake with me before I die; the mother
when shée had heard that, was glad of the cor-
rection of her Daughter, and came hastily to
her. When the Daughter heard her mother
she said O my most sweet mother, I am almost
dead, for I haue bled so much blood, that I be-
leeue I shal not escape the death. Then answe-
red the mother, said I not vnto you that ould
men are right cruell and fell, will ye now loue
the Preist? She said the Diuel may the Preist
confound and shame, I will neuer loue other
but my husband; then said the Maister to the
Emperour, Lord haue you vnderstood my? and
he answerd, right well, for amongst all other
that euer I haue heard, this was the best ex-
ample. Three euill déeds shée did to her Hus-
band, and I doubt not but if shée had done the
fourth, she would haue shamed him for euer.
Then said the Maister, therfore I counsaile
you that yée beware of your wife, least it hap-
pen worse to you, which appeares most mani-
festly in this example; if you put to death your
onely Sonne for her words you shall be decei-

ued

ned in the end, and so for ever yée shall repent it. The Emperor said, truly Maister this day my Sonne shall not die. The Maister said, My Lord I thanke you, that ye for mine Example and my sake this day haue spared your onely Sonne.

The fift complaint of the Empresse.

THE Empresse hearing that the Childe was not yet dead, forthwith apparelled her selfe, & caused her waines and Carts to be in a readinesse as though she would haue gone home into her owne Country to her Father, for to haue complained of the great shame that was done vnto her, and yet could haue no remedy therof. The Seruants seeing that, went and shewed to the Emperour, that the Empresse was going into her Country: when he perceiued that, he went to her saying, whether are you going? I hoped that you had loued mée so much, that in all the world ye would haue sought no solace but with mé. To that she said, that is true, and therefore I goe from you, for I had rather heare of

your

ur death, than to sée you die: without doubt
e delight so much to heare these masters, that
shall happen vnto you as it did to Octauian
e Emperor, the which was so couetous, that
e noble men of ỹ Empire buried him quick,
nd filled his mouth full of molten gold. The
Emperour said, Déere Wife doe not so, that a-
other time the blame to you or to me might be
id. Then said the Empresse, truly Sir the
lame is yours, for haue you not promised mée
many times that your Son should dée, and yet
e liueth: and therefore from henceforth I will
o more beléeue you. Then sayd the Emperor,
t becometh not a King euery cause lightly to
o discusse, without great aduise, and especially
pon his Son, vpon whome it is not meet but
pon deliberation, good counsell, and aduised-
nesse to passe Iudgement, and therefore I say
nd pray you, that ye will tell me somwhat by
he which I may gouerne my life: for it is the
otter destruction of a king, without aduise, and
ndiscreetly to giue Iudgment. She answered
nd said, I will gladly tell you a notable ex-
mple, so that from henceforth yée will not bee
ouetous, or desirous to heare the masters, and
o began to say in this forme following.

The

The fift Example of the Empresse.

OCTAVIANVS the Emperour raigned in ROME right rich, and couetous, and aboue all things hee loued Gould. The Citizens of ROME at that time did much harme, & many great outrages to other Nations, in so much that diuers Nations and Regions were moued and stirred against the Romaines. In that time there was Maister Virgilious, the which excelled in magicke, & in other Sciences all other Maisters the Citizens prayed him that he by his art and cunning would deuise somewhat by the which they of their enemies might haue warning and knowledge before hand, whereby that they might prouide for themselues the better. He made by his art and Cunning a Tower, and aboue vpon the Tower did cause to bée set as many Image, as in all the world were Regions and Prouinces: and in the middest of the Tower hee let to be made and set an Image which held in his Hand an Apple, or a great round ball of Gould. And euery Image of the

Towe-

lower held in his hand a little Bell, and stod
rning and loking towardes his owne Pro-
ince to him assigned: And as oftentimes as
ny Prouince would stirre and rebell against
e Romaines, so often turned him the Image
the Land, and rung the Bell: that hearing
e Citizens of Rome armed themselues and
that Prouince hasted with all their might,
e came to subdue: and so there was no Land
great that could wreake them vpon the Ro-
nans, and therefore were they dread and sea-
ed ouer all the world. Also that Maister Vir-
ill made for the solace and comfort of the powre
eople, a light that al waies burned, and by that
ght he made two Baths, the one of them hot
the which the powre people might Bath and
ash themselues: And the other colde, in the
which they might themselues refresh. Betwixt
hat light and the Baths he made an Image
anding, in whose forehead was written, Hée
hat smiteth mée, shall anon haue vengeance.
The Image stod there many yéeres, and at the
ast there came a Clarke and he beheld the I-
nage and read the writhting, and thought in
imself, What vengeance hée might find ther-
ore: I beléeue better that if any man should
mite thée, and that thou fallest therewith to
he earth, hée should find some treasure vnder

thy

thy feet, and therefore is the writing, that
man should haue it. And the Clarke lift vp h
hand and gaue the Image a great stroke th
it fell to the ground, and anon the light wa
out, and the Bathes were vanished away, an
hée found no Treasure. The poore folke pe
ceiuing that, were all sorrowfull, and laid bi
ter curses and complaints vppon him, that fo
his singular courtoulneſſe hath destroyed thi
Image, and hath robbed vs of so great a solac
and comfort: hereafter assembled thrée Kings
the which by the Romaines had béene oppreſſe
and suffered great wronges, and went to take
Counsell with them: of their Counsell, how
they might best be auenged of the Romaines
and some of them said, we do labour in vaine
for as long as there standeth the Tower with
the Images, we cannot doe any thing against
them.

At the Counsell arose vp Foure Knights
and sayd to the Kings: we haue thought on a
good remedy, how ye shall destroy the Towe
with the Images, and that for to do and bring
about, wée will our lines set to pledge, if that
you will be at the cost. Then said the Kings,
what cost shall we be at? They answered, we
must haue foure Tunnes of Gold. Then said
the Kinges, take the Gold and fulfill your pro
mise

mise: the knights tooke the Gold and went towards Rome, and when that they were come thither; In the night without one of the Gates in the Ditch full of Water they drowned one of the Tuns with the Gould in it, and another Tunne they drowned by the second Gate, and the Third Tunne they drowned by the Third Gate, and the Fourth Tunne by the Fourth Gate they drowned: and when they had thus done, early in the morning they entred into the Citty at one houre conuenient, and as the Emperour went ouer to the Mart, they did him reuerence as it behoued. The Emperour seeing them, demanded from whence they were of what Science and what Seruice they could doe, and they answered, wee are all of farre Countries, and Sooth-sayers so perfect, that there is neuer thing so priuily and secretly hid, but that we shall find it out by our dreams. Wee haue heard that ye labour and haue pleasure in such things, and therefore came we vnto you, to know if ye had need of our Seruice. The Emperour said, I shall proue you, and if it be so that I find you true, you shall haue of me great rewards and thankes. They said. we aske noething for our labours, but the halfe deale of the Gold which by vs shall bee found The Emperour said, I am very well content,

and

and thus they had with the Emperour many words. At night when the Emperour was going to Bed, they sayd vnto him, My Lord, if it please you, this night shall the oldest of vs set his Cunning a worke, and dreame: The third day he shall shew you his dreame, and what it signifieth: The Emperour sayd go in Gods Name. And they went forth with great gladnesse, and all this night they passed ouer with great ioy and mirth, vpon trust they should come to a good purpose. When the third daie was come they went earlie vnto the Emperour, the First of them sayd my Lord, please it you to goe with vs without one of the gates of the Citty, and I shall shew where there is a Tunne full of Gold hid, The Emperour said, I shall goe with you, and see if it be true that you say. And when they were come to the place they drew out the Tunne that they before there had put, The Emperour when hee saw that was glad, & gaue to them their part. Then said the Second Dreamer, my Lord, this night shall I Dreame: Then the Emperour sayd, God giue you a good Dreame. The nert night came, and hee toke out the other Tunne and gaue it to the Emperour, and toke also his share. In like manner did y third and the Fourth, vpon the which the Emperour

rour was out of all measure ioyous and glad; & sayd, he had not sæne hæretofore such true & erpert South-sayers, or Dreamers, as they were: then sayd they altogether at once, as it had bæne out of one Mouth. My Lord, wee haue one after another dreamed, the which as yée haue seene, they be all proued, but now if it please you that we may dreame all together this night, we trust that to vs shall be shewed where we shall find a great quantitie and substance of Gold and of riches: The Emperour said, God giue to you a good Dreame, which to me and to you may be profitable. On the nert morrow they came againe vnto the Emperour, and said to him with countenances full of ioy and gladnesse; My Lord, we bring good and profitable tidinges, for this night in our slæpes, such and so great Treasure is to vs shewed, the which if you will suffer it to be sought, you shall be so much inriched, that in this World shall be none like you. The Emperour sayd, where should we find Treasure? they said vnder the foundation of the Tower that the Images stand vpon. The Emperour answered, God defend that I should for loue of Gould destroy the Tower with ỹ Images, wherewith wee from our Enemies bee defended and warned. They said to him againe, my

Lord, haue ye found vs in our sayings otherwise then true and rightfull. The Emperor sayd, nay: Oh Lord said they, wee without owne hands shall giue out the Gould, without hurting of the Tower or the Images. And it is expedient, that secretly in the night, by vs it bee done, for dread of resort and concourse of the people, least that ye should run in the noise and clamours of them, and also that they should not take that good Gould away from you and vs. The Emperour sayd, go in the name of God and doe your best, as you wil or can and I shall to morrow early come to you. Then went they with ioy and gladnesse, and in the night they were let into the Tower, and then with great hast and diligence they vndermined it, and on the next day very early in the morning they mounted vpon their Horses, and rode againe towards their own Country with great ioy & glory. & ere they came without the sight of Rome, the Tower fell downe on the Morning ensuing. When it was fallen, and the Senators it perceiued, they sorrowed greatly, & there was a great bewailing throughout all the City, and they went to the Emperour and said, Lord how may it bee, that this Tower is thus fallen, by the which we haue alwayes had warning afore of our Enemies &

he answered and sayd, to mée came foure false deceiuers, and fained themselues to be Soothsayers, and that they could find treasure in the ground. And they said that vnder the foundation of the Tower was hidden an innumerable Summe of Gould, the which they should vndermine without hurting of the Tower or Images, and I gaue faith to them, and they haue deceiued mee. They answered him, yée haue coueted so much Gould, that for your vnsaciate couetousnesse, wee shall all be destroyed, but first your couetousnesse shall fall vpon your selfe: They tooke him & led him to the Capitoll, and laid him on his backe and poured his mouth full of moulten Gould, saying to him, you haue desired Gould, and therefore yée shall drinke Gould, and after they buried him quicke. Not long after that, came the Enemie against the Romaines, and ouercame and destroyed them all. Then said the Empresse vnto the Emperour, haue ye my Lord this example well vnderstood? and hée sayd, right well: Then sayd shee, the Tower with the Images is your Body with Fiue Wits. As long as you doe liue, there is none so hardy to trouble or make warre vpon you, ne vpon your people: that hath your Sonne right well vnderstood with his seauen Maisters, and

with their false narrations of Fables, seek how they may destroy you: for you are ouer much coueitous to heare and incline to them insomuch that they shall vndermine you, and cast you vnder foote, and bring you to nought The Images are your fiue Wits, that bee a lost. And for as much as you bee so Childi and foolish, they shall destroy and slay you, an your sonne shall obtaine your Empire.

The Emperour sayd, yee haue recited mee a good Example, wherefore it shall n happen to mee, as it did with the Tower, b my sonne first this day shall taste the bitterne of Death: To whome the Empresse sayd, yee do so, ye shall speed well, and liue lon Vppon the third day hee commaunded him bee led to hanging, and as he was led towar the Gallowes, came riding against him vp an Horse, the First Waister towards the Pa lace, and came before the Emperour, and s luted him with all reuerence, but he despis his salutation and put him in fears of his lif And the Waister said vnto the Emperour, m Lord, I haue not deserued to die, and for despise my salutation it is not for your H nour, for your Sonne hath not with vs bee of such Condition as yee repute him, as y in short time shall finde: and that he speake

not, it is of his great wisedome; and knowe
ée that hee shall well speake as his time com-
meth, though that he now speaketh not, as you
n short time shall heare: But, for as much as
hat hée would haue shamed your Wife, that
eléeue not, for so wise a man as hée is, would
euer attempt so shamefull a déede, and if yée
ut him to death for your Wiues wordes, yée
hall not escape without shame and vengeance
ike as Ippocras scaped not without vengeance
or the death of Galienus his Cosen. The Em-
erour said, that would I faine heare and vn-
erstand. Then said the Maister what would
auaile me to tell you this narration for your
profit, if in the meane season your Sonne shall
ie: Wherefore if yée will call againe your
onne, it shall be discouered at your pleasure,
nd after doe as you thinke best. The Empe-
rour bad call againe his Sonne, and set
him in Prison: and then began
the Maister to tell on this
manner as hereafter
followeth.

The example of the Fift Maister.

SOmetimes there was a famous Phisition named Ippocras, right cunning, the which excelled all other in Learning and Science, he had with him his Nephew or kinsman that was called Galienus, the which he loued much; this Galienus was of an excellent wit, and applied all his mind and wit to learn of his Vnckle the Scienc

ſcience of Phiſicke. When Ippocras perceiued that, in as much as he could, hée hid from him his cunning, fearing that hée ſhould excell him in that knowledge for the great wit that he was off. As Galienus ſaw this, he ſtudied and exercíſed, in ſo much that in ſhort time he had perfect cunning in Phiſicke, for the which Ippocras enuied him much. It happened vpon a time therafter that the King of Hungary ſent his meſſenger vnto Ippocras, that hée ſhould come vnto him for to cure his Son. Ippocras excuſed himſelfe and would not goe, but ſent his coſen Galienus with his Letters of excuſe for his not comming. And when Galienus was come before the King, hee was right worſhipfully receiued, and they marualled why that Ippocras would not come? Hée excuſed him, ſaying, that he had many great things to doe, and he might not come, but he hath ſent me in his ſtead, and with the helpe of God I ſhall make whole the Child: that pleaſed very well the King. Galienus went to the Childe, and when hée had ſéene his Vrine, and touched his Pounces, he ſayd to the Quéene, O excellent Princeſſe I pray you heare & ſuffer my words and tell mee who is the Father of the Childe? ſhée ſaid, who ſhould be his father but my Lord the King? Galienus ſaid, I am ſure he is not,

the Father: she answered, if ye will say that for a troth, I shall cause your head to be smote off: he answered, I say once againe, that this king is not the Father, and I am not therfore come hither to lose my head, for I haue not deserued any such reward, and so was going his way. The Queene spake, O good Master Galienus, if ye will keepe it secret and not discouer me, I shall shew and open vnto you my heart. The maister said, God defend that from me, that I to any person should shew it, and therefore O Noble Queene shew it boldly to me, for it shall neuer passe my mouth, and afterwards I shall ease and make your Sonne whole: shee said, if ye do that, ye shall haue a good reward of me, and therfore heare what I shall say. By fortune I came hither vnto my Lord, the king of Burgundy, & he was so long conuersant with me that this childe by him I bare: Then said the master feare ye not, I knew that it was so before, & anon he gaue the Child medicines, and compounded thinges whereof to eate and drinke and the child was eased of his infirmitie. And when as the KING heard that the Child was cured and recouered of his sickness, he gaue vnto the Master a good reward, but of the Queene he secretly receiued a great gift, and a speaciall thanke, and so went his way.

And

And when that hæ was come home, Ippocras his Maister demaunded of him saying, hath ye beheld the child? and he said yea: then asked he him what he gaue him, either compounded, or vncompounded things. Then said Ippocras that woman of the Child is not true to her husband, that is troth said Galienus: Then Ippocras was moued with Enuie, and thought in himselfe, if there be not found a remedie, my Science shall no more be set by, but he shall be named and praised aboue me. And from that day forward, hee bethought him and aduised how hæ might slay him. Vppon a day Ippocra called him and said, come goe with me to sæk and gather hearbes in the Garden, to whom he said maister I am ready: and when they were come into the garden, Ippocras said, I sæle that this hearb is right vertuous, stope downe & gather me of it, and Galienus did so. And as they went about the Garden, said Ippocras, now I wel perceiue the odour of this hearb, that it is better and more pretious then Gold, and therfore stope downe to the ground, and draw him out with the roots, for it is much worth: Galienus bowed downe himself to pull out the Hearbe, and Ippocras drew out his knife and killed him After that, Ippocras fell sick to the death, that the strength of his body failed him, and did as much

much as he could to help himselfe, but it would not bee, and as the Schollers and Disciples heard of it, they went hastily vnto him and did all that they might or could doe, for the profit of his health, but it auailed them nothing.

When Ippocras thus perceiued, he said vnto the Schollers, goe fetch me a great Tunne, and fill it full to the brinkes with water: and when they had so don, he said vnto them, make now therein an Hundred Holes, and when that was also done, there went none of the Water out. Then said Ippocras, behold my most déere Disciples, how that the vengeance of God is fallen vpon me, as ye may openly sée, for in this Tunne are an Hundred Holes, and yet goeth not thereout any drop: right so there commeth no vertue out of the hearbes to helpe mee: and therefore what you doe vnto mee helpeth not, for I must die: But my déere Children, if my Nephew Galienus were now aliue, hee could heale me, whom I haue slaine, and that grieueth me sore, & therfore the vengeance of God commeth vppon mée; and this said, hee turned him to the Wall and gaue vp the Ghost. Then said the Maister vnto the Emperour, My Lord vnderstand ye wel what I haue said? he answered yea, right well: what hurt had it béene to him if Galienus had liued?

The Maister answered, it had bæne right good for Ippocras at that time, had not hee eyed, and therefore by right wise iudgement of GOD, his Medecine availed him not, and therfore I shewed to you, that it shall happen worse to you, if that you put to death your son for the words of your wife, who in time of necessity shall assist and succour you: and consider yee not, that ye haue after the first Wife, wedded this Wife that yee now haue, and so yee may the Third & Fourth, and neuer shall ye haue of any of them suth a sonne, that shall kæpe and saue you from perill; the Emperour said, truly he shall not die.

Then said the master, then do you that which both becomes the wisdome of your yéeres, and the Royalty of your Person, and I commend you to God, and I thanke you that yee haue this day for me spared your Sonne. The Emperour said, I marke this well, that Women are crafty and subtill, therefore I will not for you, but for my selfe, saue him.

The Sixt complaint of the Empresse.

When as the Empresse had knowledge thereof, shee shewed her selfe so froward and impatient a body, that all that saw her or heard her, wondred and sayd to the Emperour: your Wife shee pineth away her selfe, as though shee would shortly die. The Emperour hearing thereof, went to her and said, wherfore (good Lady) be ye so impatient? she answered saying, O Lord how should I hold it in when I am the Onely daughter of a king, and your wife? and in your company I haue had a great despight & shame and continually ye haue promised me to punish him, but yet ye performe it not. The Emperour said, I wot not what I shall do? ye labor from day to day to haue my Son put to death: and the Maister labours to saue his life: and amongst all these I know well that hee is my Sonne, but where the troth is, that I know not. Then said she, this is the cause whereof I complaine, that ye beleeue the Maisters more then you doe me, and therefore it shall happen so

to you as it did to a King with his Steward. Then said the Emperour tell me that example, peraduenture it may moue me the sooner to put my Son to death: she said, gladly, but I pray you giue attention to what I shall say, and began to tell as hereafter ensueth.

The fist Example of the Empresse.

THere was a King most proud & deformed in his Visage, in such wise that all Women hated him. This King thought to destroy all Rome, and

and to take and carry away the Bodies of Peter and PAVL: who while hée was in this minde, called to him his Steward that was right secret with him of his Priuie Counsell, and said vnto him, goe and seeke a fayre Woman, that this night may slæpe with me. The Steward answered, My Lord yée know well your infirmity and disease, and that no woman will doe euill without a great Sum of money. The king said, thinke ye that for my mony, I will want one? Haue I not Gould and siluer inough? though it were a thousand Florents, I would it gladly giue. The steward hearing that, was anon smitten with couetousnesse, and went to his owne Wife, which was right faire and chast, and of good kindred, and said to her, O my good wife my Lord desireth and coueteth for to slæpe with a faire and beautiful woman, and will not forbeare it, though that shée should aske of him a Thousand Florents, and hath commanded me to prouide him one, and therefore I counsaile you, that ye to vs get that Money. The Wife sayd, were it so that the KING were not so proud and so foule of visage, yet would I not to that euill consent, for the sinne against God. The Steward sayd, I counsaile and command you, and promise you, that without ye consent to me hérein, yée shall neuer

neuer hereafter haue good day with mée: shée hearing that trembled, insomuch that for feare she consented vnto him.

The Steward then went to the King and said, Sir, I haue found out a faire woman and shée is come of a very good House, which will not lesse haue then a Thousand Florents, and in the Euening shée shall come and early in the Morning shée must away, that she be not seene of the people. The King answered and said, I am well content. When the night was come, the Steward led his Wife to the Kinges Bed, and made fast the doore and so went his way: earlie in the Morning the Steward arose and went to the King, and said, My Lord, it will bee day within a while, it is good that you performe your promise, and let the Woman goe: the king said, this woman pleaseth me so well that so soone Shée shall not depart from mee. When he heard that, he departed thence al sorrie, and tarried but a while, but came to the King againe, and said, my Lord, the morning is come, therefore let the woman go as I haue promised her, least shée bée ashamed: the King said, yet shal not shee goe from me, and therfore goe out and shut the doore againe. The Steward right sorrowfull departes, and went vp and downe with an heauie and angrie heart.

till

till that the faire and the cléere day appeared, and then hee entred againe into his Chamber and sayd, My Lord it is cléere day, suffer the woman to depart, that shée bee not therewith ashamed. The King answered, I say to you of a troth, she shall not yet depart, for her company is to me right pleasant and acceptable. The Steward hearing that, could no longer forbeare or holde his owne counsell but said to the King, O my good and gratious Lord, I beseech you suffer her to depart, for it is mine owne Wife: The King hearing that, sayd to him, open the Window. And when it was open, the faire and bright day appeared, and he beheld the woman right faire and goodly, and perceiued that it was the wife of the Steward and said to him, O thou staine to manhood, and shame to thy creation, why hast thou for so little mony shame and vndone thy faire and good wife, and hast deliuered her vnto me vnwitting? Therefore haste thée and get thée gone out of my Realme, and neuer more héereafter come in my sight, for from henceforth if euer I may sée thée, thou shalt dy the most shameful and horrible death that euer can be imagined. When the Steward heard that, he fled his way and durst not abide, and was neuer so hardie any more to come into the Realme. And the

King kept that Wife all his life time in great honour, and gaue to her plentie of all thinges that to her behoued and appertained.

After that, the King caused to be gathered and assembled a great and mighty army of puissant men of Warre, and so hee went to the City of ROME with great might, and besieged the Citty on all sides, so long, vntill the Romans would haue deliuered to him (for to haue departed & withdrawne himselfe from thence) the bodies of the holy Apostles Peter & Paul.

Then was there in the Cittie Seauen wise Maisters as yee haue now, by the counsell of whom all the City was guided and gouerned. And the Citizens came to them and said, what shall we now doe? it behoueth vs that we giue vnto your deadly enemies, the Bodyes of the holy Apostles, or else the Cittie. Then answered the first Maister, I shall with my wisdome and cunning this day saue the Citty, & the bodies of the Apostles; and so euery one of them for one day promised to doe the like, In like manner as your Maisters haue promised your sonne. With that the King began to assault the Citty on all parts: then beganne the first Maister to say and to alleadge so wisely, for to haue peace, that the King that day left his assault, and withdrew himselfe a little from the

City, and so did all the Maisters do one after another, till the last. Unto whome came the Burgesses of the Citty and said, O Maisters yee shall understand, that the the King hath made his oath swoorne, that to morrow with all his Puissance and strength hee will haue and win the Citty, or else wee must bee all in iespardy to lose our liues: therfore in acquitting of your promise, defend and kæpe vs from danger, like as your Fellowes before you had done. Then answered the Maister, and said, be of good comfort and feare not, for to morrow I shall by my cunning shew such a worke and operation, that the King and all his puissance and might shall flie away and leaue the Siege. The next day the King made and gaue great assault vnto the Citty: Then went the Maister and cloathed himselfe with marnailous strange vesture hauing therin the feathers or tailes, of Peacockes, and of other Foules of diuers colours, and toke two bright swords in each hand one, and went therewith and stood vpon the highest Tower of all the Citty, and began to moone, and turne or shew himselfe about on all partes towardes the Hoast, so that they might all behold and see him: and he held in his mouth the two bright Swords that marnailously shined: they without of the kings Hoste, beholding that

said vnto him, O King, behold vpon the highest of yonder Tower a wonderfull thing! yea quoth he, I see it right well, it is maruailous, but what it is I know not: they said, it is the God of Christian folke, that is come out of Heauen vs to slay and destroy with his two swords, if we any longer abide, The king hearing that, trembled for feare & said, what shal we do? there is but one way, and that is, that we anon goe and depart from hence, least that their God auenge himselfe vpon vs, then began the King with all his Hoast to flie: Notwithstanding there was no need, but that they of the Maister were beguiled and deceiued. And when the Romaines saw that, they hastily pursued after, all armed in good Ordinance, & the King with many of his people they killed and destroyed, and in that manner by great subtilty of the Maister, was the mighty king with his Armie subdued. Then said the Empresse to the Emperour, Lord, ye haue vnderstood what I haue said, he said, yea, very well, with good attention. Shee said, now ye haue heard what I haue said vnto you at the beginning of this Narration of the Steward that the King trusted so much, which for couetousnesse of Gold shamed his owne Wife, and he for that was driuen and banished out of the Land: In

like manner your Sonne for the desire and appetite that he hath to the Empire, intendeth to confound and destroy you. But whiles you be in your might and power, doe with him as the king did with his Steward, If you will not put him to death, then put him out of your Empire, that you without feare may liue in safeguard of your life. And haue you not also heard how the king lay before the Citty of Rome, and how he was by the Wise MAISTERS deceiued and scorned, and that he with his followers were killed and slaine? In the same manner the Seauen Wise Maisters intend to deale with you, and by crafty Wiles & subtilties to deceiue you, and in the end traiterously to murther you, so that your Son may raigne, & be whole Gouernor of your Empire. Wherupon answered the Emperour, and sayd, that shall not be so, for to morrow my Sonne shall dye. Then he commanded his Seruants that forthwith they should leade his sonne to execution. When the people had heard these tydings, they gathered themselues together in great troupes, much lamenting and bewayling the death of the Emperours Sonne: And so soone as the Sirt Maister had heard therof, he hasted him to the Emperours Court, and saluted him with much reuerence, but hee tooke all

thinges very disdainefully, and threatned him that he should be put to death with his Sonne, for that he was with them made dumbe, and a Kybaude, which was shewed towardes his Wife. The Master said, I haue not deserued to dye with your Sonne, but to haue great and large gifts, for hée is not dumbe, as you shall heare within Three dayes, if hee may liue so long: But if you put him to death for ỹ words of your wife, then shall I marualle at your wisedome, and without doubt it shall happen to you, as sometimes it happened to a knight that so much allowed the sayings of his wife that he was bound to an horse taile, & drawen throughout all the City to the Gallowes. The Emperour said, for the loue of God shew mée that Example, that I may the better beware of that perill: that will I not doe sayd the Master, without you doe call againe your sonne: then he commanded to call backe his Son, and the Maister began as followeth.

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The Example of the Sixt Maister.

SOmtimes there was an Emperour of Rome which had Three Knights whome he loued aboue al' others, and in the same City there was an ancient Knight that had wedded a fayre young Wife, which aboue all other thinges he loued, as you doe the Empresse: This Lady could sing right well and melodiously, and with such swætnesse, that many drew to her house, and desired her company. It befell vpon a season, as she sate in her house, her visage turned into the Stræt that shæ might sæ them that went by, and began swætly to sing, that all folke delighted to heare her. By chance came that wayes a knight of the Emperours Court, that heard her voyce, and beholding her with a willing minde and attentiue eare, her was excædingly taken in her loue, and then entring into her house, fell into communication and talk with her greatly, but chiefly of loue; and amongst all other talke, her demanded of her what

what hee should giue vnto her to sleepe by her side one night? she answered him one Hundred Florents. Then said the knight, tell me when I shall come, and I will giue you an hundred Florents. Sir knight, quoth she, when I haue conuenient time I shall send for you. The next day she sung againe in the same place, & it fortuned the second knight of the Emperors Court to come by that same way, the which likewise was smitten in her loue, and he also promised her an Hundred Florents; to whome also she promised to shew him a time prouided. The third day also there came to her a knight, and he in like manner was taken in her loue, to him likewise she consented, and he promised her an Hundred Florents, if that she would but giue him knowledge of the time, which she also promised. These three knights haue so secretly spoken with the Lady, that not one of them had any knowledge of anothers comming vnto her. Now the said Lady that was so malicious and deceitfull, came to her Husband, and said, Sir, I haue a secret matter to shew vnto you, wherein if yee will follow my counsaile, our necessity and ponerty you may largely releiue. Then the knight replyed, tell it to mee, and I will keepe it as secret as my life, & fulfill to the vttermost of my power. She answered

swered and said, Three knights of the Emperours Court haue bene with mee of late, one after another, in such wise, that not one of them knoweth of any others counsell, and each knight hath offred me an Hundred Florents. Might we Three Hundred Florents get, and no man haue knowledge thereof, should it not be to vs a great helpe, and our pouerty be well releiued? Then said the knight, forsooth yes, and therefore whatsoeuer you shall counsaile mee to doe, I shall most willingly performe. Then said she, thus doe I giue you counsaile, that when these knights shall come with their Florents, you shall stand behind the gate with your Sword drawne in your hand, and as they come (being that they come one after another) you shall slay them, and so we shall haue those three Hundred Florents that they bring, without any mans knowledge thereof. The knight answered, O my most best beloued Wife, I feare that this euill cannot be hid, and then we should therefore suffer death if that it were knowne. She answered and said I shall this worke beginne and I shall make therof a good end, and feare it not. When the knight saw that she was so hardy, it caused him to be the more bold; then shee sent for the first Knight & hee came to her anon without any tarrying,

to

to the gate and knocked, and she asked if he had brought the Hundred Florents, hee answered and said, yea, I have brought them with me: Then she led him in, and he had no sooner entered, but that her Husband murthered him. Immediatly after came the Second knight, who in like manner was slaine. And not long after that came the third knight whom he also slew; and hauing finished their Butchery, they conueyed their murthered bodies into a secret Chamber fit for that purpose. When they had thus done, the knight said vnto his Lady. O deere Wife, if that these dead bodies should be found with vs, wee shall die the most shameful death that can bee imagined, for it is not possible but that these three knights will be missed in the Emperours Court, and great search and inquisition will be made for them throughout all this Cittie, where they are become. She answered and said, Sir knight, I haue now this worke begunne, and shall thereof make a good end, feare it not, as I haue said before. This Ladie had a Brother, the which had the whole gouernement of the wealth of the Citty, that on the nights watched in the Streets with his fellowes; she stood at her gate and called vnto her Brother, and said vnto him, O my most best beloued Brother, I haue a secret matter

the which I would make knowne vnto you, and therefore come in with me and I will relate it vnto you. And when that he was entred into the House, the Ladie receiued him frisnely, and gaue him Wine to drinke, and sayd, me beloued Brother, this is the cause that I haue called you, for I haue much need of your counsaile. The brother answered and sayd, speake it boldly vnto mee, & whatsoeuer I may doe, to my power, that shall be at your desire without letting. Then said she vnto him yesterday came a knight in good friendship, but afterwards he fell into such words and variance with my husband, that he slew him, and hee lyeth here in my Chamber: Now my deere Brother, wee haue no man that wee may put in trust but onely you, and if that this dead body be found in our house, we shall be put to death, now shee made mention but of one. Her Brother sayd vnto her, deliuer him vnto me in a sacke, and I shall beare him to the Sea: she hearing that, was full glad thereof, & deliuered vnto him the body of the first knight; he tooke it and went withall a good pace, and cast him therein. And assone as this was done he came againe vnto his sister, and sayd vnto her giue mee now of the best Wine, for you are out him quit, and she gaue him thanks, and went

int

to her Chamber as though shee had gone for-
Waine, & began to cry out with a loud voyce,
e knight that was cast into the Sea, is come
gaine: As her Brother heard that, he won-
ed sore, and said, giue me him, I shall sée if
will rise againe, & toke the body of the se-
nd knight (supposing it had béene the body of
e first knight) and went to the Sea, & with
great stone he drowned him therein. That
ne, he went againe vnto his Sisters house
nd sayd, now fil! me a cup with good Waine,
r I haue drowned him so déepe, that hee shall
euer come againe: then said she, thankes be to
God, and went againe to her Chamber, and
ained her to fetch Waine, and cryed with a loud
oice, alas, woe be to mee, hee is risen againe,
nd come out of the Sea: And as her Brother
eard that, with a great marnaile said, what
Deuill is this knight that I haue cast into the
ater, and yet notwithstanding he is come a-
aine? Deliuer him me the third time, and I
all sée if hee will come againe: Then shee
aue to him the third knight, which hee did be-
éue to haue béene the first, and went without
he City to a great Forrest, and made a great
Fire and cast the knight therein. and when he
as almost burnt, the Brother went thence a
ittle distance to doe his néede. Then came

there

there was a Knight that would ride to the Cit
where in the morning they should haue a Tou
ney and Justing, and it was cold weather a
darke, and he was not farre from the Citty,
when he had a sight of the fire, he drew there
& lighted from his horse, & warmed him. T
watchmen came and said to him, what art thou
The knight sayd, I am a gentle knight: th
spake the watchmen & said thou art no knigh
but a Diuel, for first I cast thee into the wat
the second time with a great stone I drowne
thee, and the third time I haue put thee in th
Fire supposing thou hadst beene burnt, and y
thou standest here, and then he toke the knig
with his horse, & cast them both into the Fir
After that he went againe vnto his Sister, a
told what had happened to him, and said no
bring me of the best wine, for after that I h
burnt him I found him againe by the fire wi
a horse, & I haue cast them both into the fir
& by this his Sister perceiued well that he h
burnt a knight of the Tourney: who an
brought him of the wine abundantly, and aft
he had well drunken he went thence. Not lo
time after there fell a great debate and conte
tion betwixt the knight and his wife, in su
wise that he smote her, so that she had indign
tion thereof, and waxed angry, and sayd, th
ma

any might heare it, O wretch wilt thou kill
ee as thou hast done the three knights of the
mperours? certaine men that hearing, layd
nds on them, and brought them before the
mperour, and the woman confessed that her
sband had slaine three knights of the Empe-
urs, & how hee tooke from them three Hun-
ed Florents. And as it was thus in troth
nd, both were drawne at an horse taile, and
nged vpon ỳ Gallowes. Then said the Mai-
r to the Emperor, haue you vnderstood what
haue said? Ye answered, right well: I say
certaine, that wife was the worst woman
t might be of all women; for first she moued
d stirred him vp to murther, & afterwards
couered him. The Maister answered & said,
thout doubt it shall happen vnto you worse,
you put your Sonne to death by the aduise of
your wife. The Emperour said, my Son
shall not die this day, The Maister
hearing that, gaue thankes to
the Emperor, and toke
leaue and went
his way.

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The Seauenth complaint of the Empresse.

When the Empresse heard tha Son of the Emperour was living: as a mad woman she to the Emperour weeping a crying, saying, O vnhappy w woman, alas, what shall I do: must needes slay my selfe that am so shame and no punishment therevpon done: the E perour answered, God defend, that you sho haue minde on such a wicked deed, but suf a while and you shall haue a good end of yo cause. She answered, Sir, the end shall be ev for of that shall follow to you & me great co fusion. The Emperor said, leaue of such tal She said, Lord, it shall come to you and yo Sonne as it happened vnto a King and to h Steward. I pray you tell me that example; h said, I will gladly tell it, but I feare that y will heare me no more: For the nert day t Seauenth Maister shall speake, and saue yo Sonne from the death as the other Sire of h fellowes haue done. And the nert day af th

hat your Son shall speak, of whose words you hall haue & take such ioy and delectation, that he loue betwixt vs shall bee wholy forgotten nd washed away. The Emperour said that is mpossible to me, for I shall neuer forget your loue.

Then said she, O my best beloued Lord, if it pleasè you, I will tell you one example, by the which you shall beware before of many perills to come and especially of your accursed sonne, who intendeth to destroy me by his Maisters.

The Emperour said, tell on your Example: And the Empressè beganne to tell of this as hereafter followeth.

The Seauenth Example of the Empresse.

THere was sometime a king, th
which loued his Wife aboue al
things, insomuch that he close
her in a strong Castle, and he
bare the keys of the Castle him
selfe; the Ladie was therefo
right

ight heauie and comfortleſſe. Now in farre Countreyes there was a valiant knight, the which in the time lying in his bed, dreamed after this manner: he thought verily that he ſaw one of the faireſt Quéenes that euer mans eye might behold, whoſe loue aboue all other women he deſired to obtaine: & that if he might ſee her walking, hee ſhould certainely haue ſome knowledge of her, by whome towards him great friendſhip and honour ſhould come. To the Quéen that ſame night by viſion of the ſayd knight, the like was alſo ſtrangely ſhewed, and as yet they haue not any knowledge of each other, neither of name, nor yet of fame. When the knight had thus dreamed and ſeene (as he thought) a moſt vertuous and comely Lady in his ſléepe, hee then determined in his minde that his foot ſhould take no reſt, vntill the time that hee had found out the Lady that to him in his dreame ſéemed ſo glorious: And hauing taken his horſe, and with him all that was neceſſary for his Iourney, he then trauailed throughout diuers Regions, Countries, and kingdomes, ſo long, vntill at the laſt hée came into the ſame Land where this foreſayd Quéene was by her iealous Husband enclo ſed and kept in a ſtrong Caſtle. And when this ſaid knight was come into the ſayd Citty, and

hauing for a certaine season therein soiourned: It so fell out, that vpon a day as the knight walked by the Castle (and knew not as then that the Queene was therin kept) shee was at that time sitting in a window to behold and see the people passing by, & amongst all others shee espied the knight that before we spake of, and knew him to be the same man of whome shee had dreamed before: And the knight by chance lifted vp his eyes, and perceiued the Lady sitting in the window, and anon his minde gaue him that it was she of whome he had dreamed, and shee began to sing a Song of Loue. And as he heard that, he was then taken with her loue. The knight from thenceforth dayly went and walked about the Castle, beholding it all ouer, to espy if that any manner of way he might get in, to declare the secret of his minde vnto her. Then the Lady perceiuing that, shee presently indited a Letter, and secretly conueyed it vnto him from forth the Casement of her Chamber window. And when he had perused ouer her Letter, and vnderstanding the will of the Ladie, hee without any delay beganne to haunt Iusts & Tournaments, and he did performe so many great and marualions acts, that the fame of him came to the eares of the King. And assone as the king heard thereof, he sent after

him

him, and sayd vnto him, Sir Knight, I haue heard that you haue got much honour at our Iusts and Tournaments, wherefore if it will please you to abide heere & dwell with vs, we shall giue you large guifts and rewardes. The knight answered and said, O right mighty Prince, I am your seruant, would to God that I could do any seruice that might, be pleasing vnto your magnificence without taking of any reward, saue one thing before all other I desire. The king said vnto him, shew it vnto mee boldly what thing that is: The knight answered, My Lord, seeing that it hath pleased your most excellent Maiesty for to take me for your Seruant, and One of your most graue Counsell, it now seemeth vnto mee to be most expedient for both our delights, that I had a place nigh vnto the Wall of the Castle, that I at all times might be the more ready at your calling When I haue need. The king answered and sayd, I consent vnto you, making it as you shall thinke it best. Then the knight caused many Workemen to bee brought before him, and hauing so done, he chose out certaine men fit for his purpose, and caused them to build a faire lodging neere vnto the wals of the Tower, and all this being finished he made a couenant with one of the Workemen (whome he

thought fittest for that purpose, to make out of his house a secret way to the Quænes lodgings: And when this was finished according to his desire, hee then killed the workeman because hee should not make it knowne to any; And hauing thus done, hee then went in vnto the Queene, and did her reuerence, for it did become him so to doe, and they discoursed of many matters: And hauing thus passed away the day and the night drawing on, he then desired that he might sleepe by her one night, but shee oftentimes did denie him, and yet nevertheleste shée consented vnto his request. And now they hauing spent the night in their pleasures, & the morning being come, this knight then returned to his owne lodginges: And the Quéene began to thinke with her selfe, and sayd, what shall I doe? If I should make the King my Husband acquainted heerewith, there would two euils come thereof: The one is my shame, and that peraduenture he should vtterly forsake me and cause me to bée driuen out of his Land for euer. The other is, that hée would slay the Knight, for from death it was not possible for him to escape, and therefore I thinke it to be more expedient for mé to bée secret herein, then for to reuéale it vnto any. After that, the knight, as often as it plea-

sed

sed him, went in vnto the Quéene, and did his will with her, and she gaue to him a King, the which the king had giuen her at her wedding. This knight was so famous, and had such excellent knowledge in Justing, that in euery battell and Tournament hee had the Victory, for which cause he was held in great estimation and fauour with the king, so that he made him his Steward and Gouernour ouer all his Region and Land. It happened vppon a day that the king was disposed to ride on hunting, whereof he commanded his Steward to make him ready on the morrow for to goe with him whereunto he offred himselfe most willingly. And vppon the morrow after they entred into the Forrest, and all that day they chased and followed the wilde Beasts, that they were so weary growne, that the king did sit downe by a Fountaine to rest him, and the knight by his side: and the knight was no sooner set but hee fell on sléepe by the king, hauing the King vpponh is finger which the Quéene had giuen him, which the king perceiuing and marking, did know it right well. Now when the knight awaked and perceiued that the king had séen he King, then he fained himselfe to bee sore sicke. and he said vnto him. My honoured Lord, I séele my selfe so sore sicke, that if I doe not

with all the spæd I may hast me vnto my lodging, and there sæke out some present remedy, either by meanes of Phisicke, by some other course or else I am but a dead man, and therefore I pray you giue me leaue for to goe home. Vnto whome the King made this answere, and sayde: Goe my deare Friend, in the Name of God, and sæ that there be nothing wanting which may procure thy Health, that either my Court or kingdome can afford. The king had no sooner ended his spæch, but immediately the knight toke his leaue of him, and getting vpon his Horse he then hasted vnto his house, & assoone as he was come home hee presently lighted and hasted him vnto the Quæns lodgings, and gaue her the King againe, and he told her withall how that the King had espied it vpon his Finger, when they were both weary and set downe to rest; and withall hæ told her that he fained himselfe to bæ sore sick, for which cause the king gaue him leaue for to returne backe to his lodging; He also prayed her that if the King at any time should call for the King, that immediately she should shew it vnto him. This done, hee toke his leaue of the Queene, and went downe againe to his lodging. And not long after the king came vnto the Quæne, & the Quæne receiued him right louingly:

louingly, and after that a little time was passed, the king said vnto her, My renowned Lady, shew me where the Ring is that I gaue to you, for I haue a great desire to sée it: Shee answered and sayd, O my best beloued Lord, to what intent at this time do you desire to sée it? Then said hee, if you shew it not to me incontinently, it shall repent you. Then shée arose vp and went vnto her Chest, and toke the King out of of it, and hauing thus done, she brought it to the king her Husband: And when he had séene it, he then was halfe ashamed, and said vnto her: My best beloued Quéene, O how like is the knights Ring vnto this your Ring, which I saw vppon his finger, for I beléeued that it had béene mine, and therefore that was the cause why I did aske so hastily of you for it. And now of this euill suspition I yéeld my selfe guilty against you my déere Lady in this behalfe, for the strength of the Tower deceiued me, for I thought none could get therin but I my selfe alone, in regard that no man hath the kéeping of the keyes but my selfe onely. Shée said vnto him, my déere Lord wonder not, for one King may be like vnto another, & workemen do seldome make one piece of worke, but that there are others that make the same, but God forgiue you in that you haue so suspected

me for you know the strength of the Tower, and the Keyes you haue alwaies in your pre-sence, and will trust no man therewith. After that the knight ordained a great Dinner, and sayd vnto the King, my Soueraigne, it is so that my Ladie and Loue is come hither from out of my Countrey to seeke mee, for whose sake I haue ordayned a dinner to bee made, therefore I would intreate your highnesse that you will do me that honour as to Dine with mee at my House this day, and to take such meate as shall bee there prouided. The King answered and sayd, most willingly will I do vnto you that worship, and more. The knight was glad thereof, and then by his secret way he went vnto the Queene, and said vnto her: My welbeloued Lady you must doe thus, you shall come to my house by the priuy way and you shall cloth your selfe in rich clothing and decke your selfe with Jewels and other ornaments, according to the maner and custome of my Country, and then you shall sit at the Table with my king as my Soueraigne Lady, and make him good chere. She replyed vnto him after this manner. Sir knight I shall bee ready to doe all thinges according to your desire, and when the time appointed was neere at hand, and that the king was comming from

he Castle towards the knights House, in the
meane time by the secret way the Quæne did
nter into the knights Lodgings (before that
he King could come thither) and apparelled
er selfe after the manner of the knights
Countrey. And when the king was entered
nto the house, shee mæting him with courtly
alutations receiued him. And when the king
ad beheld Her, hee demaunded of the knight
hat Woman shée should be that seemed vnto
im so faire? Then answered the knight and
aid, my renowned Lord, it is my Soueraigne
Lady, that now euen for the loue that she be-
eth mée is come out of my Country after me,
o know wher-fore I should absent my selfe so
ng both from her loue and Seruice. Now
heir speech being ended, the knight caused the
ng to sit downe at the Table, and made the
Quæne to sit by him, & the king thought that
was his Quéene, and said within himselfe,
O how like is this Woman vnto my Wife:
o the strength of the Tower still deceiu'd him,
hat he gaue more faith and credence vnto the
knights words, than hee did to his owne eyes.
The Queene began to speake and talke to the
ing, and to stirre him to eate and drinke and
make good chéere: And as the king heard that
oyce, then he said vnto himselfe, O blessed

Lord,

Lord, how like is this Woman to my Quée
in her behauiour, speech, visage, and in all o
ther thinges and Conditions? and still th
strength of the Tower deceiued him. In th
end of the feast the knight prayed his beloue
Lady to sing a Song before the king, and she
beganne to sing a Song of Loue: When th
king had heard Her, he knew her voyce, an
thought vnto himselfe, is not this my Wife
And yet how can this be she, I hauing the key
of the Tower my selfe in keeping? and so al
the time of Dinner the king sat striuing an
debating thus within himselfe: But Dinne
being ended, hee willed the knight that forth
with he would take up the Table, hee hauin
some vrgent occasions that mooued him there
vnto, for he was great in thought & sore trou
bled in his mind. Whereupon the knight an
swered and said, My Lord, what is the reaso
you are so melancholly and sad, what is it tha
discontenteth you, bee not much troubled i
your mind: And if it please you we shall make
you some pleasant sport and solace. And th
Gentlewoman sayd, My beloued Lord, if i
shall please you with vs to abide, we shal mak
you all the pleasure and delight that this plac
can afford, in such sort that if your Quéene he
selfe were héere, shee could not giue you mo
conten

ntent. Wherupon the king began to bee
ry angry and said vnto him, take away the
able, for I may no longer heere abide vntill
at I haue resolued my minde. Then the
night obeyed the commandement of the king
d instantly toke vp the table, giuing thanks
nto them all, but especially to the king his
ost Soueraigne Lord and Master. Now the
ng hee departed from the knights house, and
ent with all hast that might bee vnto the ca-
le, intending to see whether that his Queene
ere therein, or not: But in the meane time
e Queene went in at her priuie doore, and as-
ne as shee came therin, slipped off her vpper-
ost vesture, and then put her selfe into the
me habite which the king did leaue her in.
ow when the king had entered therein, hee
und the Queene in the same clothing that hee
d left her in before; and seeing all thinges
ell out contrary to his expectation, he then did
mbrace her, and most louingly kissed her, and
yd vnto her, this day haue I eate with my
night, and with his beloued Lady, who hath
me out of her Countrey vnto this my Court
finde him out, who being together met, and
ee ouermuch toyed in the sight of her, did pre-
ntly ordayne a great Feast to bee prouided,
nd humbly did intreat me to doe him so much

Grace

Grace as ỳ I would accompany him at hi
Feast: Whereupon I answered, that for th
loue I did beare him I would doe him that ho
nour, and much more if he should request m
Whom I hauing beheld, and she seming vn
me so faire, that since I was borne vnto th
day mine eyes haue not seene in all the Wo
one so like as thee is to you, insomuch that a
the dinner time I was so much troubled wit
many matters, that I could hardly endure vn
to the end of the Feast, but that incontinent
ly I must come home to see whether you wer
here or there. Then the Queene answered an
sayd vnto him, O mighty king, wherefore do
you so much mistrust me, hauing so oftentime
found the contrary? Doe you not know (ye
right well) that this Tower is so fast, stron
and inuincible, and that no Man can enter in
nor out, without your knowledge, for you hau
alwaies the keeping of the keyes, and will no
trust any man therewith, how were it the
possible that I should bee there? Sometimes
you shall find one man to bee like another, yo
remember of late how you did misstake th
knights King, imagining it to bee the Kin
which you gaue me, and haue you yet more ar
guments of suspition against me? Was it no
sufficient for you to debarr me of my liberty

for

these many yeares, but that you must néedes
ealous of me besides: I tell thée, O Noble
, that if you doe not forsake this your iea-
sie, and also release me out of this place of
prisonment, that before some few daies hoe
pired I will end my daies herein: for I had
ther liue as a seruant at liberty, then now
to be a Quéene. and to liue herein as a pri-
ner. Then the king answered and said vnto
, all this that you haue related is true, for
hich cause I acknowledge my selfe to be guil-
of all these accusations, wherfore haue pa-
nce but for some few dayes, and as sure as I
igne king of this country and Castle, I will
yon at liberty, and so he louingly imbraced
with a kisse, and then returned to his owne
gings. Now hee had not rested in his lodg-
g aboue two daies before the knight came
to the Court, and said vnto the king, O my
nourable Lord, I haue of long time serued
ur Highnesse, and now it is time that I
turne againe into my owne Countrey, and
all the Seruice that, I haue done vnto your
nour, I desire that you would doe but this
e thing for mee, that is, that you my noble
rd would doe me but this one fauour before
y departure hence, which is, to giue to me
fore the Priest with your owne hand; in the

face

face of the Church, my beloued Lady, whom
I intend to wed, who hath followed me out
farre countryes for the loue of mee, and whom
I shall bring thither againe as my lawfull and
true Wife, the which thing will bee vnto me
great worship and honour, when I shall come
into my owne Countrey. The king answered
and said vnto, him that petition and much more
then that (if you will desire it of mee) will I
gladly doe and fulfill. Then the knight prefix-
ed the day of their Marriage, at which day the
good King came to the Church beeing honou-
rably attended. The Priest he was ready, and
stood adorned with his vestments for to solem-
nize the Matrimony. The knight hauing ap-
parelled the Quéene in his owne house after
the manner of his owne Countrey, and had or-
dayned Two knights for to leade her vnto the
church, and they beléeued that it had béene his
Paramour: And when they were come into
the face of the Church, the Priest sayd, who
shall giue this woman vnto this knight? Then
the King sayd I shall giue her vnto my owne
knight and tooke the Lady by the hand and said
vnto her, O good Woman, you are much like
vnto my Quéene, and therefore my loue is to
you the greater, and also because you shall bée
wedded vnto this knight whome I affect aboue
all

all other men, and he shall be of my house, and so he put the Queens hand into the knights hād and then the Priest after the order of the Ceremonies of the Church bound them, and wedded them together in true and Faythfull Wedlocke.

And when all these Rites were finished and done, the knight spake vnto the king, and said, O Noble king, the Ship that I intend to goe in towardes my Countrey, is now furnished very fitting for my Journey, and now is ready for to sayle away, wherefore I humbly beseech your most noble Grace, that it will please you for to accompany My beloued wife thereunto, and that you will aduertize and admonish her to loue me, and that shee should haue me in fauour aboue all other Creatures liuing, and so much the rather for your good exhortation and counsell thereunto. Then the king with a great company of his Followers (besides others,) went with them. and did accompany them vnto the Ship: For whose departing to the Shippe, many of them were exceeding sorrowfull and heauy: Then the king beganne to say vnto the Queenes my most deare frind hearken now well vnto my Counsell, and se that you follow it for it shall bee to your profit: My much honoured and beloued knight

hath

hath now wedded and done to you all the wor-
ship and honour that in him is, wherefore loke
that you loue, honour, and obey him aboue al
earthly creatures, as God hath commaunded
and that you be vnto him true and constant in
all your dealings. And assone as this spæch
was ended, hæ deliuered her vnto the knight
saying, My blessing goe with you both and
our Lord kæpe and conduct you in safetie vnto
your owne Countrey. Then the knight and
the Queene bowed and inclined their heades
downe to the king, and gaue him thanks for
all those courtesies and kindnesse that hæ had
done for them, and hauing so done they com-
mitted him to the Almightie, and entred into
the Ship, and the Marriners hoysted vp their
sayles, and sayled forth before the Winde, so
that within a short space the king had lost the
sight of the Shippe: And from thence he went
hastily vnto the castle, and being thither come
he presently went to sæke for his Quæne, and
when he could not find her, hee was then mo-
ued in all the parts of his Body, and sought all
about the Tower: he searched so long vntill at
the last he found out the hole of the secret way
that the knight had caused to be made, and as
he saw that, he wept bitterly, crying out, and
sayd: Alas, alas, this knight in whome I had

so great confidence and trust, hath robbed mee and hath taken away my Wife: Was not I a fole, that I gaue more faith vnto the words of a Knight, then I did to mine owne eyes? Then spake the Empresse, and said, My Lord haue you vnderstood what I haue sayd? The Emperour said, well in the best wise that may bee. Then answered the Empresse, and said vnto him remember how that hee trusted the Knight, and yet the Knight deceiued him: In the like manner you will put your trust and confidence in the Seauen Wise Maisters, and they labour for to destroy mee that am your Wife, & you giue more credit to their words, then you do vnto your owne eyes, for you haue well seene how your vngratious Sonne hath rent and scratched mee, whereof yet I beare and haue his tokens & markes about me as you may plainely see, and also you know right well how that your accursed Sonne hath shamed mee, & you marke not how they defend him in his their folly and extreame falshood; therefore it is to be feared, that it shall happen vnto you worse then it did to a king of whom I haue spoken vnto you already: the Emperor replyed, I will beleeue mine eyes before that I will giue any credence to their wordes, and therefore I say vnto you, to Morrow I shall do

rou Iuſtice vpon my Sonne. The next daie the Emperour Commaunded that his Sonne ſhould be brought beſore him, which thing being done according to his deſire, he then commaunded that his Son ſhould bee led vnto the place of execution, and there to ſuffer death according to the Law. Then there began to arriſe a great noiſe and much bewayling amongſt the common people for the death of the Emperours onely Sonne. At the laſt when the ſeauenth Maiſter heard and perceiued that, he ran immediatly vnto the Officers which were leading him to the Gallowes, and ſaid vnto them, my dearely beloued friends, I pray you not to make ouermuch haſte, but ſtay your hands yet a while, for I thinke this day (with the gracious helpe and aſſiſtance of Almighty God) to ſaue and deliuer him from all perills and dangers: And from thence the Maſter haſted him towards the Emperours Pallace, & there hee did him reuerence according to his accuſtomed dutie: But the Emperour with great wrath and indignation againſt him, made him this anſwer. Neuermore haue you any toy nor comfort in this world, for that you haue ſent my Son home both vntaught, and dumbe, whom I deliuered vnto you well ſpeaking, for which cauſe you ſhall all bee put to death with him.

The

The maister answered and said vnto him, O most noble Emperor, the time is not long betwixt this and to morrow noone, then (by the grace of God) you shall heare him speak, and that both wisely and discreetly, and vnto you he shall declare the truth of all thinges, & that I will promise you he will performe to the full vpon paine of my life, if you will spare him so long time, if you find it not so, then take my life and the liues of vs all. Then said the Emperour, if I might but heare my Son speake, it would giue me sufficient contentment, & I would not desire longer for to liue. Then answered the Master, and said vnto him againe, all this and more you shall both heare and see, and confesse it to be true, if you will but abide this little time, and then shall this dissention be onely knowne. and the strife that hath beene betwixt vs and the Empresse, will clearely be decided. And if that you doe not call againe that Noble Prince your sonne, but suffer him to bee put to death through the wordes of your most vngodly and wicked wife, I tell you of a troth, that it shall happen worse to you then it did to a knight that dyed for a little blood that he saw his wife bleed, to whom afterwards she was most vnnaturall. Then said the Emperor that example would I faine heare. Then said

the Maister, let your Sonne be called againe, and I shal tell you so notable an example, that during your life you may beware of the vntruth & vnstedfastnesse of women. Then the Emperour said, I shall goe call my Son back againe, vpon condition, that to morrow I shall heare my Son speake as you haue promised me: the Maister said, do that my Lord, for it shall so be, and beganne to tell as hereafter followeth.

* * *

The Example of the Seauenth Maister.

THere was a Knight that had a faire young Wife, whome he loued entirely, insomuch that hee could not be out of her sight. It happened on a time that they played together at chesse, and the knight by chance held a knife in his hand, and she playing, fortuned to smite her hand on

the knife, that a little had began to appeare. When the knight saw that his Wife bled, he sorrowed much, and was sore affrayd of his Wife, that he fell to the ground in a swound, his Wife seeing that, cast cold water vpon his Face, insomuch that hee came a little again to himselfe and said lightly, cal the Curate with Holy Sacrament, for I must die; for the blood that I haue seene come out of your finger, hath smitten death to my hart, then the Priest came and comforted him, and administred the Sacrament vnto him. And anon after he dyed, without any tarrying, for whose death, there was made great sorrow and bewaylinges, and especially by his Wife: And after that the Obsequies were finished and done accordingly, she went and laid vpon the Grane, & there made great sorroln and lamentation, and said, shee would neuer depart from thence, but as a Turtle Doue she would for the loue of her husband there abide, and dye: Then went her Friends and Neighbours vnto her and sayd, what auayleth this for his Soule, to liue here weeping vntill you die? It is better that you goe home to your house and there giue Almes to the poore for the loue of God, and that shal more availe your Soule, then in this place to abide. To whome shee answered, I pray you

hold

hold your peace, ye are euill counsellors, consider ye not how I am from him separated and parted by death for a little blood that hee saw come out of my hand or finger? and therefore I shall neuer from hence depart.

Her friends hearing that, made her a little house and lodging nigh vnto the graue, and put therein all thinges that to her was necessary, and went their wayes, thinking that within a while shee would be weary to be alone, and so desolate from all company, that thereby she should desire againe the company of people.

In the Citty there was then a Law, that if a trespasser, or offender against the law were hanged, The Sheriffe all the night should watch and keepe the dead body, armed: and if it happened that the body of him hanged were stolen away, The Sheriffe should lose all his Lands and his life at the kinges pleasure. It hapned soone after that the knight was dead, a man should be hanged for trespasse that he had doue, so that the Sheriffe according to the law of the Land, all the night watched by the Gallowes, that was not farre from the Cittie, and the Church-yard was not farre from the same: then began the Sheriffe to be so cold, that hee could not possible indure it, but was euen ready to die with cold, except that he might spedi-

ly warme him, it was so extreame colde, and so great a frost: and by chaunce he beholding from thence about him, and spying a fire in the church-yard, hasted him and came thereto, and when he was come nere vnto it, he called and knocked at a litttle House: Then the woman spake and sayd, who is that who at this time knocketh at the house of this sorrowfull Woman? He answered, I am the Sheriffe that hath indured much colde, that I am ready to freeze to death, except without delay ye let me in to warme my selfe: She sayd vnto him, I feare that if I let you in, ye should shew mee such words that should cause me to bee more heauier: then he said, I promise vnto you that I shall say no words to your displeasure: then she let him in, and when he had sitten a while by the Fire and was well warmed, he said vnto her, O faire woman, with your licence would I faine speake but one word with you: Shee answered him, Sir, say what it pleaseth you: then he sayd, O Lady, you bee a faire Gentlewoman, rich, and yong, were it not better and more conuenient for you to dwell at Home at your house, and to giue Almes, then to waste and consume your selfe here with weping and crying? She sayd, Sir knight had I knowne this before, you had not come herein, for I say

to

you, as I haue sayd to others oftentimes, I know well that my Husband loued me so ll, that for a little bloud that he saw mée so d on one of my fingers, he is dead, where- e I will here die for the loue of him: And the knight heard this, hee tooke his leaue d went againe vnto the Gallowes, And en he was come thither, and saw that the hée that he left there hanging, was stollen d carried away, he beganne to ware heauy d fell for sorrow, and sayd, woe is me, what ll I doe, for I haue lost my life and all my ds? and he going vp and downe thus full of row and knew not what way to turne him- fe. at the last he bethought himselfe to goe that desolate Lady, and shew vnto her the uinesse of his heart, to wit, if she could giue any good counsell. And when he was come ther, he called, and she asked him the cause his knocking, then sayd he, Madam, I am Sheriffe that was right now with you, and would faine shew vnto you the secrets of my rt, therefore I pray you for the loue of God n the doore: and he went in and sayd to her, most vertuous Lady, I am now come to e your counsaile and aduice, for you know ll the Lawes of the Land are, that whenso- r any man is hanged and stolen from off the

Gallowes

Gallowes, then the Sheriffes life and goods
in the Kinges hands. Now it happened in
time that I was here with you and warn
me, the Theefe is stollen from the Gallow
therefore I pray faire Lady for the loue of G
giue mee your best aduice what is best to d
shee answered, I haue compassion vppon yo
for by the law you haue lost your life and go
to the King. Doe now after my counsell a
yee shall neither lose life nor goods: he answ
red, therefore I am to you greatly bound; h
ping to haue good comfort: shee sayd, will y
then promise to take mee to your Wife? T
Knight answered, would God that yee w
indeed so minded, but I feare least yee wo
disdaine so much to humble you vnto mee t
am so poore a Knight, she said I giue you
will thereto, and he gaue her againe his w
and consented to be her knight during all
life. Then said she, you know well that s
a day my Lord was buried, which for the lo
of mee dyed: take him out of the Sepulch
and goe hange him vp in stead of the Theef
The knight answered her, Lady your conn
is very good. Then went they together a
opened the Sepulchre and drew him out. T
knight said vnto the Lady, how shall wee u
doe, because ere the Theefe was taken a
hang

anged, Two of the vpper teeth were smitten
t of his head, & I greatly feare mee, if that
ere perceiued, I should die the death. Then
e Ladie sayde vnto him, take a Stone and
rike out two of his teeth, and the knight an-
wered, Madam, that may I not do, for while
e liued, he was my trusty and welbeloued
iend, and it should bee to mee great rebuke.
I should consent to do so disloyall a deed vn-
o his body being dead: shee answered, for
our loue should I doe it, and presently toke
stone and smote out two of his teeth, and said
o the Sheriffe, take him and hang him vppon
he Gallowes like to the Theefe. And the
knight sayde, I feare me to doe it, for the
Theefe in taking of him, was wounded vpon
is head, and lacked both his Eares. O Ma-
dam, God forbid that I do so to the dead body
that I loued so well in his life. Then said she,
giue me your Sword, and I shall for the loue
of you doe it, and so toke the sword and smote
a manly stroake vpon the dead mans forehead
and cut off both his Eares; and when shee had
thus done, she said, Now take and hang him,
without company, and then the knight answa-
red, yet I feare to hang him, for the theefe
wanted both his Stones, and if that hee were
searched & found without all our labour were

in

in vaine: Then sayd shee, I neuer saw a ma
so fearefull, seeing the matter so cleere and sur
take a knife and cut of his Stones. And h
answered that may I not doe in any wise, a
therefore I pray you spare mee, for you kno
well what a man is without his Stones. Sh
said for the loue of you I shall doe it, and to
the knife in her hand and cut off her Husban
Stones, and said to him: Now take the chur
thus disfigured, & hang him vp without dread
and they went both together, and hung the b
dy vpon the Gallows, and so was the Sheri
delinered of the Kings danger. Then said th
Lady, now yee be quit of all your dangers and
deliuered from all Sorrowes and dangers by
my counsell, therefore I desire you (according
to your promise) that yee wed mee in the face
of the Church: The knight sayd, I haue made
a vow that I will neuer wed other so long as
you liue, which I shall performe. And then hee
said. O thou most shamefull and worst woman
of all Women, who would take thee to bee hi
Wife: An honourable & a louing knight wa
thy Husband, who for a little bloud that he
saw issue out of thy finger, dyed. Now hast
thou smitten out two of his teeth, thou hast cut
off his eares, and his stones, & thou hast made
him a great wound in his Head: What De-

uill

ll would marry thée: And therefore thou
alt neuer shame good men more, I shall rid
e of thy life, and so he drew out his sword,
d with one stroake hee smote off her head.
hen the Maister said vnto the Emperor, my
rd, haue you vnderstood what I haue said, &
answered, right well. Amongst all Women
is was the worst, and the Knight rewarded
r accordingly, so that she should no more do
en shame: And the Emperour said moreo-
r, O my good master might I but once heare
y Son speake, I should haue no care of my
e. Then said the Maister, to morrow you
shall heare him speake before you, and he
shall shew the troth of al the variance
betwixt vs & the Empresse as I
hope, and so tok his leaue
of the Emperor and
departed.

***

¶ How Diocleſian the Emperours Son complained on the Empreſſe: and how excuſed himſelfe of her complaint.

AND after that, al the maiſter assembled together, and took counſell how and in what manner they ſhould bringe the Chi out of Priſon, and lead him the Pallace: and ſo they wen to the Childe whereas he lay in Priſon, befo Midday, his will and counſell for to heare. T whom the child ſayd, what you will, that ſha pleaſe me, but in no wiſe buſie your ſelues ho I ſhall anſwere, or what I ſhall ſay, for wi ioy I ſhall anſwer all thinges that ſhall be d maunded of me. When the Seuen wiſe Ma ſters heard that, they were exceeding ioyfu and glad, and they cloathed him in purple, a in cloath of Gold, and two of the ſaid Maſte went before him, and one vpon his right han another vpon his left hand, and the other th followed after him, and before them all we tweine men with Inſtruments of muſick wi

brough

ought him with great honour and melody to
e Pallace, and when the Emperor heard all
is melody, he demaunded what it was: then
was told him by ſtanders by, ſaying: High-
Emperour, it is your Son which commeth
efore you, and before all your Lords to ſpeake
nd excuſe himſelfe of all that is laid vnto his
harge. The Emperour ſaid, that is good ti-
ings if I might heare my Son ſpeake. And
hen the childe was come into the Pallace, he
ode to his Father, and ſaid vnto him, haile my
oſt deere, and moſt royall Father.

And when the Emperour heard the voice of

his

his Sonne Diocletian, he was so glad, that for ioy hee fell downe to the earth, but his Sonne hasted to take vp the Emperour his Father againe, & when he was come to himselfe, then beganne his sonne to declare and open all the whole matter vnto his Father: and then there came so great a Multitude of People into the Pallace to heare the Childe speake. and the ioy and noyse of them were so great, that the child could not possibly bee heard. The Emperour considering that, caused money to be throwne into the Streets, that the People therewith should bee busied and auoyded out of the Palace, that thereby they might the better heare the child speake, but the folke toke no regard at all after the mony which they cast abroad. And when the Emperour perceiued that, presently he commanded silence vpon pain of their liues: And when they were all still, then the Childe began to speake as followeth. O most deare Father, before that I speake any thing, I intreate and beseech you, that the Empresse with all her Chamber maydens may come and be present: and so the Emperour commanded the Empresse with all her Chamber-maydens to come without delay. The Empresse hearing that (being in great feare) came with all her maides, and the Child commaunded them

to

to stand before all the people in a row, that he might see them. Then said the child, Sir lift up your eyes, and behold the Chamber-maide that there standeth in the green clothing whom you know the Empresse loueth best above all other, Command her to be vnclothed vnto her naked body before vs all, to see what shee is: the Emperour sayd; my deere Sonne, that would shame vs all to haue a woman to stand naked before vs: Yee said, if it be a woman it is my shame; and if not, let the shame abide in her. When that she was vnclothed, they said it was a man, and so it appeared, wherat they greatly wondred.

¶ The Declaration of the Complaint of the Emperours Sonne on the Empresse.

THen said the Son vnto his Father, behold, this Ribaude hath many a Night lyne with your Wife in your Chamber in adultery, and hath defiled your Bed, and him the Empresse loueth above all others, the which thinge you did not know.

When that the Emperor had seene and be
held these thinges, he with great indignatio
and wrath gaue commaundement that both th
Empresse and the Kibaud should be burnt: bu
the Sonne answered and sayde, My Lord an
Father, make no hast to giue iudgement be
fore I haue reproued Her of these grieuou
slaunders that she did thus falsly accuse me o
e that I haue declared how vntrustly shee hat
camplained of mee, and sought by all meane
how she might take my life from mee. The
said the Emperour, my deare Sonne, I com
mit all the Judgment into your handds. Th
Sonne answered and said, if shee be found fals
and a lyar then the law shall giue sentence a
gainst her: But my royall Father, when yo
sent after mee at her earnest suite and reques
then I with my Maisters beheld the starres i
the Firmament, by which I might perceiu
that if I should haue spoken any Words unt
you, or to any other liuing Creature, within th
space or Seuen daies, I should haue dyed
most shamefull death, and for that cause onel
I did forbeare to speake vntill this present
And wheras the Empresse most vntrustly ha
accused mee that I should haue oppressed a
rauished her; therein I say shee lieth falsly, f
she most adulterously would haue prouoked m
fo

for to defile the bed of my most gratious Lord and Father the Emperour. And when shee in no wise could bring mee thereto, then shee tooke a Pen Inke, and Paper, and bad mee write the cause wherefore I would not yeeld vnto that which she so earnestly desired: And when that I had written the cause wherefore I woulde not commit such great and abhominable sin, shew that I would not my Fathers Orchard defile; Then began shee to tare her clothes, and scratch her visage that it gushed forth with blood, and cryed with a loud voyce, and said, this my Sonne (having a mind full of Lust) would haue wronged your Princely bed, and I resisting his lustfull mind, most inhumanely hath he torne my flesh. When the Emperour heard this he beheld her with a fell countenance, and said to her in this manner, O thou wretched woman was it not sufficiēt to fulfill thy soule and lecherous appetite, thou and thy Kibaud, but wouldst also haue made my Sonne: Then fell the Empresse to the Emperours feete, and she cryed vnto him for mercy. The Emperour said, O thou cursed and most vnhappy woman, thou askest forgiuenesse and thou art worthy none to haue, for thou hast deserued to die in three manner of wayes. The First is, that thou hast committed adulterie:

The second is, that thou hast lasciniously hast prouoked and stirred vp my Sonne vnto most wicked and abhominable Sinne, and hast imputed and layd the crime falsly & vniustly vpon him: And the third and last is, that thou hast euery day enticed & prouoked me with thy false tales to put my Sonne to death, and therefore the law shall haue his course against thée, and shall condemne thée vnto death, according as thou hast deserued.

Then answered his Son, and said, Most Noble Father you know well that for the leasinges that she had laide vpon me, I was dayly led vnto hanging, but my Maisters with the helpe of God haue deliuered mee. O my most honourable Lord and Father, it was said vnto you by the Empresse, that I would also by the helpe of my maisters depose you out of your Empire, and that I did labour by all meanes possible to destroy you, and to sit my selfe in your kingdome, would you not then haue much grieued & sorrowed: Haue you not the whole command and gouernment of this your Kingdome, wherefore then should I not vse all the knowledge and skill I haue to helpe you my most honoured Father, rather then any manner of way for to destroy you. And now seeing that from you I haue my liuing, I will re-

pute

ute you for my Soueraigne Lord & Father, uring the terme of my life, and I will not in ny manner depriue you of your honour, but shall labour and busie my selfe about the go- erning of the same, and all your commande- ments I shall fulfill in euery thing: But it is n the same manner as the Father that cast his onn into the Sea for to drowne him becauls e said that he should liue to see him for to be a reater Lord then his Father was, and yet the onne by the prouidence of God was saued; nd he beca ne a greater Lord then his Father, yet was no hindrance to him, but rather pro- ted him much: also you see and remember hat my life & carriage shall neuer hinder you, ut it shall be to your ioy and comfort. Then ayd the Emperour, blessed bee the Almightie od, and the houre that euer I begat thee, and essed to haue such a Sonne that I find so wise nd expert in all good things: tell me an exam- le, by the which I may perfectly vnderstand y wisedome, and that my heart may the bet- er enioy thee.

Then sayd the Sonne, my honourable Fa- her, command first silence to bee made of your eople, that I bee not letted in my words till hat I haue done: And when that is ended,

giue sentence with righteousnesse of the Law vpon mee, and vpon the Empresse. Then commaunded the Emperour silence, and the Child begaune to tell in ample manner as hereafter followeth.

The Example of DIOCLESIAN the Emperours Sonne.

THere was a king which had but one Sonne that hee loued right dearely in the beginning as ye now all onely haue loued me, whom he deliuered vnto a Maister that dwelt in a farre Countrey, for to be brought vp in learning and knowledge. This childe as he wared in yeeres, so hée increased in wisedome and knowledge, and profited himselfe very much therein; And when hee had béene with his Maister Seauen yeares, his Father desired to sée him, and sent Letters vnto him that hée should come againe into his Countrey, and visite his Friends, in like sort as you haue sent for mée. The Child

was

was obedient to his Father, and came at his commandement: at whose comming he did exceedingly ioy, for that hee was growne as wel in comelinesse of Body, as also in Doctrine and learning, and to euery man hee appeared pleasant and gentle.

It happened vpon a day, that the father and the Mother sitting at the Table, and the childe serued them, a Nightingale came flying before the Window whereas they sate, and beganne to Sing sweetely that they marualled, and the knight sayd, O how sweetely this Bird singeth, well were hee that could vnderstand

his Song, and could shew the interpretation thereof. Then said the Son, my worshipfull Father, the Song of the Nightingale I could well declare, but I feare your displeasure. The Father sayd, say boldly my Sonne the interpretation of the Bird, and then yee shall prooue whether I shall be angrie or not, but I shall marke well the reason of mine anger: And when the Son heard that, hee said, the Nightingale hath said in his song, ỹ I shall become a great Lord, and I shall be worshipped & honoured of all men, and namely of my Father, the which shall bring me Water to wash my hands, and my mother shall hold the Towell. The Father said, thou shalt neuer see the day such seruice of vs to haue, nor none such dignitie shall follow thee, and in great madnes and woodnesse, he tooke his Sonne vpon his shoulder and ran to the sea and cast him in and said, lie there the interpreter of the birds song. The Child could swimme, and swimmed to a Land where he was foure dayes without meate or drinke: the Fift day there came a ship sayling, and as the Child saw that, hee called vnto the shipmen, and sayd, for the loue of God deliuer mee from the perill of death, the shipmen saw that it was a faire young man, & they had compassion on him, and went with their boate to

set

him abord, and carried him into a far coun-
ey, and sold him there to a Duke. The
hilde grew very proper and faire, and the
uke loued him much, and had him greatlie
his fauour.

And vppon a time the King of that Realme
call a generall assembly of all ỹ great Lords
d Noble-men within the Realme together
; to sit in counsell. This Duke then prepa-
d and ordained him to goe to the said Coun-
l, & gaue great regard vnto the wit & wise-
me of the Child, and therfore toke the child
ith him. And when they were all gathered &
embled before the king and his counsell, my
lbeloued Lords and Friends said the king,
ll you know the cause wherefore I haue as-
mbled you together? They answered & said,
e all are (Soueraigne Lord) at your com-
ndement. Then said the king, it is a secret
tter that I shall shew you: if that any man
n open it, and declare what it signifieth, I
ear and promise vnto him by my Crowne
t I will giue vnto him mine onely Daugh-
in Marriage, & he shall be my fellow in my
alme so long as life doth last, and after my
th he shall haue & possesse al my whole king-
me: and the mistery of the Counsell is this.

Thee Rauens follow me still whereso
that I goe, they leaue me not but cry out wi
such horrible voyces that the paine is grieuo
and wearisome for mee to heare them, & muc
more to behold their lookes, therefore if ther
be any man which knoweth the cause of th
their earnest following of mee, and can te
or shew what they meane by there crying, a
auoyd them away from mee, without doubt
shal fulfill this promise that I haue made. A
as the king had thus said, there was no
found in all the Court.ile that vnderstod t
cause, or could remoue or put away the R
uens. Then answered the Childe, and sa
vnto the Duke, my Lord thinke you that t
king will performe what hee hath promised
and will you that I giue the king knowled
of you what you can doe? Then the Chil
sayd, I will my life set in pledge, and I sh
performe and make it good what I haue sa
When the Duke heard that, he went to t
king and said: My Lord and king, heere
a young man right cunning and wise, and
doth promise for to fulfill and satisfie in
thinges what you shall aske & desire touch
these Rauens, if you wil fulfill what you ha
promised. The king swore by the Crowne
his kingdome, that which I haue promised,

ll thinges shall be fulfilled. Then he brought
he child before the King, and when the king
ad beheld him, hée spake vnto him after this
anner, Daire Child, can you giue answer
this my Question? the Childe answered
nd said, yea my Lord, & that in the best man-
er. Your question is, wherefore that the Ra-
ens follow you, and horrible call vpon you?
o which I answere: Vpon a time it happe-
ed that there was two Rauens, a Male and a
emale that had brought forth between them
third Rauen, & in that place there was such
great Famine and scarsitie of all manner of
ode for the preseruation of their liues, in such
t that Men, Beasts, and Foules died, and
erished for want. Now the third Rauen was
t that time very young, and not able to flée a-
oad to get her liuing, the Female shée left it,
eking whereby she may best get her owne li-
ing, and to shew that shée did nothing regard
er young one, she came no more to the neast:
he Male Rauen séeing that, with great pe-
ury and labour fed the young Rauen till hée
as able to flie. And now when this great
earth was past and gone, then the Female
auen returned home againe to the yong Ra-
en, and would hold fellowship and company
ith him: But the Male Rauen séeing that,

he

hée would haue driuen her away, saying thus that shee in his great misery and necessity left him and his company, and therefore now shee should haue no company nor Fellowship with him. She alleaged and said, that she had in his hatching great labour and sorrow, and suffered much penury, and for that cause shee would rather enioy his company then the Male Rauen. For this cause my Soueraigne Lord they follow you, asking true iudgement which of them both shall haue company with the young Rauen? and this is the cause of their horrible clamours and noyse that they make daylie vpon you.

But my honoured Lord, had you hereupon a right wise Sentence giuen, you shall neuer more sée them, or be troubled with their crying. Then answered the king, and said, because that the Female hath left and forsaken the young Rauen in his most necessity, it standeth with reason and Iustice that she shall not follow him, but bée without his fellowship: And where shée saith, that in the hatching and bringing forth of him shée had great paine and Trauell, that helpeth not, for her paine was turned into ioy as soone as shée saw the young Rauen in the world. But in regard that the Male is the cause of production and generation

on

n of euery beaſt of the earth, & euery foule of he ayze, and alſo becauſe the young Rauen in is neceſſity was ſuſtained and fed vnto the re- ouery & nourithing of his body, by the Male. Therefoze I conclude both foz indgement & ſen- ence diffinitiue, that the yong Rauen ſhall a- ide and kæp company with the male, and not oit, the Female.

And when the Rauens heard this ſentence, with great noiſe and cry they flew vp into the yze, and were no moze ſeene noz found in all hat Region.

When

When this was done, the King demande
of the young man what his Name was? H
answered, and said, I am called Alexande
Then said the king I will that you shal gra
me one request, which is, that from hencefo
you shall name and take mee, and none oth
for your Father, for you shall haue my daug
ter to Wife, and you shall haue the whole G
uernement and possession of this my Realme
This young Alexander abode and dwelled
there with the King, and euery man did exce
dingly loue and fauour him, for he began to hau
Iusts and Turneyes, wherein at all times h
did winn the Prize before all others that we
in Ægipt, so that his Peere or like was not
be found, neither were there so hard or obscu
a question put to him, but that he could ma
knowne the true Sence and meaning thereof
At that time there was an Emperour who
name was Titus, that excelled in gentlenesse
courtesie, and curiosity, all other Emperour
king, and Princes in the whole World, in
much that such fame and noyse flew and ra
ouer the world of it, that whatsoeuer he w
that would learne and profit in cunning ma
ners, or behauiour, he should goe to that E
perours Court. And when Alexander hea
thereof, hee said to the King, my most hono
rab

able Lord and Father, you know well that the world is full of the fame of the Emperor, that it is very delectable and pleasant to abide, and well in his Court, wherefore if it please you my renowned Lord and Father: I would very gladly goe to his Court, to the intent that I may obtaine more wisedome, & grow prompter in manners and behauiour then now I am. Whereupon answered the king, it pleaseth me right wel. but I would that you take with you plenty of Gold & siluer, and other necessaries, so much that you mine honor there may saue, and that you may haue also the which is to you most requisite and necessary. And also it séemeth vnto mée to be very expedient, that before your departing, you should Marry my Daughter.

Then answered Alexander, will it please you my Lord to spare mée at this time, and at my comming home againe I shall wed her with all honour as vnto her appertaineth. The king answered, since that it is your will to go vnto the Emperours Court. I licence you, & therunto I giue my consent. Then Alexander did take his leaue of the king, and take with him abundance of Treasure, and thee he went to the Emperours Court: and when hee was come, with many followers he went before

the

the Emperour and fell vpon his knées and sa-
luted him, and did him reuerence.

The Emperour rose vp from his seat impe-
riall and kissed him, and asked him of whence
and what he was, and wherfore he was come
he answered and said, I am Son and Heire o
the King of Ægypt, & am come to doe seruic
to your most High Maiesty, if it please you t
accept of me. The Emperour said, that he wa
right heartily welcome, and committed him t
his Steward and made him his Caruer. Th
Steward ordained him a faire Chamber, an
prouided for him all things that were necessa-
ry to the same, & Alexander behaued himsel
so well, that in short time hée was beloued
all the people.

Not long after that, came the Kings sonn
of France to doe Seruice vnto the Emperour
and to learn good qualities, and faire and com
ly behauiour, him the Emperour receiue
honourably, and demaunded his name, and
what kindred he was come: Hé answered
am Son to the King of France, and I haue
name Lodowick, your seruant, Then said th
Emperor I haue made Alexander my Carue
& you shall be my Cup-bearer, that alwaies y
shall doe seruice at my Table: and commam
ded the Steward to assign him a lodging, whon
h

hée placed with Alexander in his Chamber. These two Gentlemen were so in like stature in visage, and condition, that hardly the one might be discerned or knowne from the other, but that Alexander was more cunninger in all his dæds then was Lodowicke, for hée was a feminine Man, & shamefast: and these two young men loued well together.

The Emperour had one only Daughter named Florentine, she was right faire and gracious and should be his Heire, whome he loued entirely, she had a Court by herselfe, and seruants to her assigned: to her the Emperour every day was accustomed to send from his table of his daineties in token of loue, by Alexander: insomuch that the Daughter begann to haue him marvailously in her fauour, because of his wisedome and comely behauiour. It happened vpon a day Alexander at meate time had such busines that hee serued not at the Table, nor none other gaue attendance for him in his roome, Lodowicke perceiuing that, serued in his roome, and assone as hée had served the Emperour in his last seruice vpon his dæ, the Emperour commanded him to beare dish to his Daughter as he was wont to doe, thinking that he was Alexander: Then toke Lodowicke the dish and went to the Palace of

the Emperours Daughter, and saluted her with great reuerence, and set the meate before her, and vntill that time he had not seene her: shee perceiued anon that it was not Alexander, and sayd to him on this manner, what is your name, and whose Sonne are you? Hee answered to her and said, Madam, I am the Kings Sonne of France and my name is Lodowick, shee said, I thanke you for your labour, & then he toke his leaue and departed. In the meane time came Alexander to the table, and they fulfilled their seruice.

The Dinner being done, anon Lodowicke went to bed sore Sicke, and Alexander perceiuing that, went to his Chamber and said vnto him. O my most best beloued Friend and fellow Lodowicke, how is it with you and what is the cause of your infirmity? Hee answered him and said, the cause I know not, but I feele me so sore sick that I feare me I cannot escape the death. Alexander said, the cause of your infirmity and disease I know well, for to daie as ye did beare the meate to the Emperors daughter, ye beheld her countenance and beauty so feruently, that your heart was taken and rauished with her loue. Whereupon he answered O Alexander, all the Phisitions in the world could not more truly iudge my sickneſſe, but

fea

feare it will be my death. Then said Alexander, bee of good comfort, and I shall helpe you vnto my power: and so forthwith went to the Merchant, and bought with his owne Money a faire Cloath set with precious Stones, vnknowne to Lodowicke, and presented it in his behalfe vnto the Princesse. As soone as she beheld that, she asked him where he had that costly and precious Cloth? and hee said, Madam of the Sonne of the most Christian King of France, who sendeth it vnto you for your loue: for hee hauing but once beheld your Princely face, is growne so sicke that he lyeth vpon his bed euen vnto his death, and therefore if you suffer him to perish, you shall neuer recouer againe your honour.

Then sayd shee, good Alexander, would you thus counsaile mee that I should lose my Virginity: God defend that, and be you sure Alexander that for such messages, you shal neuer more winne thankes of me, therefore goe you out of my sight, and speake no more thereof to me. When Alexander heard that, hee did obeysance and departed.

The next day Alexander went againe to the Cittie and bought a Chaplet that was twice more in valus then the Cloth, and therwith he went to the Princesse chamber and gaue it to

her on the behalfe of Lodowick. And when she saw that costly gift, shée said vnto him in this manner. I marualle of you, that so often as you haue seene and spoken with mée, that you haue not done your owne errand in speaking for your selfe, but for another. Then answerd hee, O Madam I haue not béene so disposed because my birth is not to be compared with yours, and also it happened me neuer such a case as my heart was so wounded: and he that hath a good fellow is bound for to doe him good and true fellowship. And therefore mow excellent Princesse, of your most abundant pitty haue compassion on him, and make him whole that you haue so sore wounded to Death, that it bée not for euer laide vnto your cruelty and hardnesse of heart. Shée answered him, goe your way, for at this time I will giue you no answer thereof: and as he heard that, he toke his leaue and departed.

And the third day hée went to the Citty, and bought a girdle that was more in Valew, and costlier then the Chaplet was, and presented it to her on the behalfe of Lodowicke: & when she saw & beheld that gift so precious, shée said vnto Alexander say to Lodowicke that he come to my Chamber about the Third houre in the night, and he shal find the doze open, and Alex-

ander

ander hearing that was glad, & went to his fellow & said, my best beloued fellow bée of good comfort, for I haue conquered ỳ Princesse to you, & this night I shall bring you to her chamber: And when that was said, he started vp as though hee was wakened out of his sléepe, and was well reuined, and for great ioy he became well: the nert night following Alexander toke Lodowicke & brought him vnto the Chamber of the Lady, with whome he was in solace and ioy all night, and from that time forth all her heart was vpon him, so that there was but one onely loue betweene them both.

And after that Lodowick vsed oftentimes to visite her, so that by processe of time it came to the eares of the knightes and gentlemen of the Court, how that the Emperours Daughter was knowns by Lodowicke, and they conspired among themselues how they might finde him, and intrappe him therewith, and so for to take him. As Alexander had knowledge thereof, he armed him to withstand them, and when the knights vnderstood that, they fearing Alexander, suffered his fellow for to go in peace. Alexander many times put himselfe in ieopardy for him, bée not knowing thereof, but the Princesse knew it well.

In short time after that, there came Letters to Alexander, of the death of the King of Egypt, that hee should hastily come and receiue his Kingdome with honour and ioy, and that shewed he euen to the Princesse and to Lodowicke, & also of his departing, wherefore they were sorrowfull and heauy. He said also vnto the Emperor, my most honourable Lord, pleaseth it you for to vnderstand, for I haue receiued Letters of the death of my Father, wherfore it behoueth me to goe & receiue the kingdome, and that you will be pleased to giue me leaue to depart, and for all the benefits to mee done I offer my selfe and all my goods: And rather then I should by my going, any way offend or displease you my Lord, I shall forsake all my Realme, & all that I haue in the world, and abide with you still. Then said the Emperour, know you for certaine, that for your departure I am right heauy and sorrowfull, for you were the best Seruant that was in all my Court, but it becommeth not an Emperour to hinder his seruants from their promotions or aduancements, but rather to promote them to higher or greater honour. Therefore goe you vnto our Treasurer and hee shall deliuer you as much Gould as you will haue, and in the Name of God (and my blessing) goe into your

Country,

Countrey. And thus Alexander had leaue of the Emperour, and bad him farewel, and they were all sorrowful for his departure, for he was beloued of all.

Lodowicke with the Princesse brought him on his way Seauen Myles at the least: after that Alexander would not suffer them to goe any farther, then fell they both to the ground with great sorrow and heauinesse. And Alexander toke and lifted him vp againe from the ground, and comforted him with faire words, and said: O Lodowicke my most best beloued Fellow, I warne you, that the secrets being betwixt you and my Lady, you hide and kéepe them as priuily as you may, & take good héede to all things, for I wote another shall come and be in my stead, that shall enuie you of the fauour and grace that you stand in with the Emperour, and daie and night shall lie in wait to take you with a fault, and to put you vnto rebuke and shame. Then answered Lodowick & sayd, O Alexauder I shall beware as much as to me is possible. But how shall I now doe, when I shall want your company? Therefore one thing I shalll desire of you, that you take this Ring of me for a remembrance. Then said he, I shall for the loue of you gladly receiue your Ring, and yet I shall neuer without the

King forget you, and so hee committed them both vnto God. Then they imbraced each other about the necke and kissed, and so they departed.

Not long after the kings Sonne of Spayne named Guido, was receiued of the Emperour in the roome and place of Alexander, to whom the Steward assigned Alexanders place & chamber, the which was very sore against the will of Lodowick, but he could not helpe it.

Guido seeing that Lodowick against his will had him in his fellowship, anon he grew enuious against him, so Lodowicke of a long time for feare of the said Guido, kept him out of the company of the Ladie. Neuertheless, afterwardes being ouercome with her loue, sometime he haunted & went againe vnto her as hee before had done: Guido quickly perceiuing the same, waited so long thereon, that he knew the truth, & was therefore certaine that the Princesse was by Lodowicke knowne, and had accompanyed with her.

Vpon a time it happened that the Emperor stood in his Hall and praised Alexander for his gentlenesse and wisedome. Guido hearing that sayd, my Lord, he is not so much worthy to be commended as you imagine, for he hath a long time beene a traytor in your house.

Then

Then the Emperour said, tell me how? Gui-
o said, you haue but one Daughter onely the
hich shall be your Heire, and her Lodowick
th defiled, and lyne by through the helpe of
lexander, and he goeth to her euery night as
pleaseth him.

And as soone as the Emperour heard there-
, he was sore moued, and began to be angry,
d it hapned Lodowicke vppon the same time
come through the Hall, and as the Empero
w him he said, what heare I of thee thou euil
d vntrue body? If it bee found and proued
ue, thou shalt Die the most shamefull death
at can be deuised. Lodowicke said, my Lord
e Emperour, what is the cause? Guido an-
wered, I say, and depose here before my Lord
gainst thee, that thou hast defiled his onelie
aughter, and eurry night thou goest to her, &
est Fornication with her, that with Battell
shall proue and make it good vpon thy bodie
ith my body. Then said Lodowicke I am in-
cent and not infected with that crime, and
lsely thou doest belie me, & thervpon I hold
e battell, and I trust to God thy falshood shal
me vpon thine owne head. Then the Em-
rour assigned vnto them the day of Combat.
hat done, Lodowicke went vnto the Ladie
d shewed to her the cause, and the day of bat-

tell

tell by the Emperour assigned, and in wha
manner Guido had accused him, and said unt
her: Now it behoueth me to haue your coun
sell, or else I must die, for as you know
had not auayled mee to haue gayne-sayd th
battell, without I should haue yéelded my sel
guilty: Guido is strong and hardie, that hi
like is none but Alexander, and I am fæble,
therefore if I fight the Battell against him,
were but a dead man; and so you shall abide re
buke and shame. Then said shee, follow m
Counsell in that you mistrust your selfe, go
hastily vnto my Father and say vnto him, tha
yée haue receiued Letters, whereby you ar
assured that the king your father is sore sic
and lyeth vpon his death bed, and desireth to s
you, and to speake with you in person, and
dispose of his kingdome before hee depart o
of this life: so desire him to giue you leaue f
the loue of your Father, to goe visite him, an
that hee will prolong and lengthen the day
Battell, that in the meane season you ma
goe & come. And when you haue gotten leaue
as hastily as you can, secretly goe to king A
lexander, and being thither come, take him
part, and shew him the cause of your commi
and require him in this your great extreamit
that he will helpe and saue vs.

An

nd when Lodowick had heard her counsell, leased him well, and hée did accordingly: haning obtained leaue, and a long day, and ite of the battell prefixed and assignes, hée n departed, and tooke his iourney towards Realme of Egypt, & neuer stayed day nor ght till hee came into king Alexanders Ca-

And when that King Alexander had vnder-nding of his comming, he was very glad, & nt to mæte him, and receiued him honoura- and he did wonder much at his comming. hen said Lodowicke O my dære Lord, & my t beloued friend, my life and my death is your handes, for as you said to mæ before t I should haue another fellow, the which uld lie in waite to espie mee, and to destroy e, without I did loke more wisely vnto my fe: So, as long as I could I did abstaine om her, till I might no longer abide: but af-rwardes the Kings Sonne of Spayne made atch so long ouer me, vntill he perceined the ath. In the end he accused me vnto the Em-rour, so that on the eight day hereafter from is day I must be ready, and prepare me for fight with him body against body: and as ye ow well he is a very strong and hardy man, d I am weake and fæble, and therefore hath

Florentine

Florentine counselled me that I should not
this matter from you, for she knoweth you
a faithfull friend, and that you would not le
vs in this necessity.

Then said Alexander, is there any body
knoweth of your comming vnto mee for
matter more then Florentine? hee answe
him, and said, no creature liuing, for I to
leaue of the Emperour to goe visite my Fat
lying grieuously sicke. Then Alexander as
of him what Counsell hath Florentine gi
you now, and in what wise I might he
you? He said, O my most constant and fai
full Friend, in this wise shee hath counsa
mee; considering that we be like one anoth
that you should come and performe the bat
with him, and no man should know you but
and the Battell done, I should come againe
the Court, and you returne backe to yo
owne Countrey. Then he asked him wh
the day should be of the Battell, and hee sa
Eight daies heuce.

Then sayd Alexander, if I should this
day tarry before I depart hence, Then I ca
not come by the day prefixed. Whereupon
derstand what I will doe: I haue bidden
my subiects, that to morrow they should co
to my wedding, and if I should goe, then is

loſt: if I goe not and doe the battell, then
rentine and you are vndone, what thinke
is beſt to be done: When Lodowicke did
e that, hæ fell to the earth, & began to ſor-
out of meaſure, ſaying, ſorrow and heani-
e come ſuddenly to me on all ſides. Then
Alexander vnto him, be of good comfort
I ſhall not forſake you in this ſort, though
ould loſe my life and kingdome, but hear-
what I haue thought vpon: inſomuch that
are both like one to another, ſo that the one
s cannot bee knowne from the other, and
or me I am not greatly knowne here, but
my Barons, & all other my Subiects will
e you for me, therefore here you ſhall abide
rry & marry my Wife in my ſtead, & hold
Feaſt & Nuptials, & doe in all things as if
y ſelfe were there preſent, except when as
come to bed to with my wife, looke that you
there true and faithfull, and I ſhall with-
tarrying goe and take my Horſe and ride
her whereas the battell ſhallbe, & if god giue
the victory that I may ouercome and van-
ſh your enemy, I will come againe ſecretly
you ſhall go againe vnto your beſt beloued.
is done, Alexander bad Lodowicke fare-
l, and then hæ toke his Journey towards
Emperours Court, for to fight and doe the

battel

battell with Guido, and Lodowick tarried Ægypt in stead of King Alexander.

And vpon the next morning came Lodow as though he had bæne King Alexander, there solemnly in the Face of the Church espoused King Alexanders Wife, and solem zed the Marriage Feast with great royalty delicates and dainty meates, plenty of all m ner of Wines, and diuers melodies of Inst ments of musicke, and great ioy and chére the Noble men, and all other people that w there assembled. And when the night was c he went to Bed with the Quæne, & laid twæne him and her a naked Sword, whe shee had great wonder, but nothing shæ sa and so hee lay with her euery night so long Alexander was out.

Now King Alexander at the day that pzefixed and set, came v to the Emperou sayd, O most Soueraigne Lord, it is so, I haue left my Father very sicke, and in g hazard of death, yet neuertheles I am com perfozme my pzomise, and with a full res tion to defend mine honour. The Empe sayd, you doe honourably and accozding to valour of a Noble Man, and fozture shall nour you (I hope) in your iust and right quarrell.

And when the Emperours daughter vnderstood that Alexander was come, anon shee sent for him, and when he was come to her she very courteously and kindly imbraced him, and with great ioy and gladnesse she kissed him, and blessed the time that she might see him againe, and demaunded of him where he had left her faithfull Friend and Louer Lodowicke? Then hee declared vnto her the whole discourse and circumstance, how hee had left him king in his Realme: and so he toke his leaue of her, and went to Lodowicks Chamber, and there was no creature that thought otherwise but that he

was

was Lodowicke, except Florentine onely, The next day following before Alexander went vnto the Battel, hée sayd vnto the Emperour in the presence of Guido, My most renowned Soueraigne Lord, Guido hath falsly and vniustly acused me vnto your most noble Grace in saying that I should be of such acquaintance with the Princesse your most vertuous & onely Daughter, which is to the great dishonour of your most noble Person, and hers: whereunto I sweare and affirme by the holy Euangelists, that shée was neuer in such manner otherwise knowne by me as he hath alleaged and informed vnto you, which I shall proue & make good this day vpon his body, with the ayd and helpe of God.

Then answered Guido, yet once I say againe, and sweare by the Holy Euangelists and by all that God hath made, that thou hast had knowledge, and hast defiled the Emperors Daughter, and that I shall make good vppon thy head.

Whereupon they lept vpon their Coursers and ran so fiercely one at another with their Speares, that they both brake and shiuered in péces, and then they drew their Swords and fought so long together, vntil at the last Alexander with great might and strength at one

strok

stroke smote off Guidoes head, and sent it vn-
to the Emperors daughter, whereof shée was
right glad, and bare it vnto her Father, and
sayd, Father, behold the head of him that hath
so falsly defamed you and me.

When the Emperor perceiued the victorie,
vpon he sent for Alexander, whome he thought
to haue béene Lodowicke, & said vnto him: O
Lodowicke this day your honour & my daugh-
ters you haue saued, you shall stand and be to
morrow in my grace and fauour, and whatso-
euer that he be that hereafter shall againe de-
maine you, shee shall for euer stand in my indig-
nation.

Then answered Alexander, and said, God
alwaies helpeth and saueth them that put their
trust in him, and reuengeth the wrong done
vnto the innocent.

But now most renowned Lord, one thing
I doe intreat at your hands: at my departure
from my Father, I left him sore sicke, that it
will please you to giue me leaue to goe and sée
how it standeth with him, and if that hée be a-
ny thing amended, I shall incontinent come a-
gaine. Then the Emperour said, that pleaseth
me, but you may in no manner of wise leaue
me, for from henceforth I cannot bée without
your presence.

Now Alexander hauing taken leaue of the Emperour, bad him farewell, and with al the spæde he could make, rode backe againe vnto his Realme. Now Lodowick hauing heard of his returne, with much ioy he did ride to mæt him, and hauing met together, with great gladnesse and chære he friendly receiued him and said, O most true friend of all friends, tell me how fortune hath fauored you in this your iourney and businesse, and to what end you haue brought it? Then said he, goe to the Emperour, and serue him as you haue done before, for I haue gotten you more grace and fauour at his hands than euer you had in former time, and I haue also cut off the head of your greatest enemie and aduersary.

Then said Lodowicke, you haue not onely at this time saued my life, but in like manner you haue preserued mee hæretofore, the which kindnes I shall neuer forget, neither as yet I cannot it requite, but God reward you, and so he departed, & went againe to the Emperours Court, and there was no man that had any knowledge of the absence of King Alexander except Lodowick onely.

And when that night was come, he went to bed to the Quæne, & as soone as he was layd in bed, hee began swætely to imbrace her, and

with friendly wordes hee kissed her. Then saide she, you haue made this time too long, in that you haue shewed nothing of friendship or loue, how may this be? Then saide he, wherfore say you that? Shee sayd, euery night as I was in my bed, you haue put betwixt you & me a naked Sword, and you haue neuer turned you towards me vntill now. And when he heard that, he thought on the truth of his fellow, and saide, O my deere Lady, it was not done for any ill will, but for a good probation of loue; But he saide to her selfe, that loue shall you haue no more, but despight, and I will be reuenged vpon thee.

Then there was a knight ỹ shee before had a little loue and fauour vnto, and shée baganne for to loue him more and more, so long till at the last they thought and imagined how they might destroy and slay the king, and therefore they got poyson and poysoned the king, so that if he had not béene right strong of complexion, hee had dyed thereof, for it wrought in him so sore, that it caused him to be a most fowle and horrible Leaper as euer was séene vppon the earth. The Lords and Noble men of his sayd Realme, and the Quæene also séeing, this despised him, and sayd, that it behooued not a Leaper to raigne ouer vs, for he should not procure nor ingender any faire or cleane heires, and so he was deposed of his dignity Royall, and driuen out of his Realme.

In the meane time dyed the Emperour of Rome, & Lodowicke married his Daughter, and after that Lodowicks Father died, so that Lodowicke Raigned both Emperour of Rome, and king of France at once.

When king Alexander heard that, he thought in himselfe, now my Fellow raigneth and ruleth both the Empire of Rome and Realme of Fraunce, to whom may I goe better then vnto him, for whom many times I haue ventured my life: And vpon a night hee rose vp & made

him

him ready, and toke with him his staffe and clapper, and went towardes the Emperours Country.

And when he was come nigh vnto the gate, he sate downe among other poore Lazers, expecting the giuing of Almes, and vppon a suddaine as the Emperour went out of his Pallace, all the poore Lazers began to ring their clappers, and the good King Alexander did as the other did, but there was no Almes giuen to him: he tarried so long vnto the time that the Emperour was set, and serued at the Table.

Then went King Alexander vnto the gate, and knocked thereat, and the Porter asked who was there? Alexander answered him, I am a poore despised man, and I pray you for the loue of God turne not away your sight from my visage, but that you will for the reward of God doe my message vnto the Emperour: he asked what is the matter? Alexander said, goe and tell him heere is a Lazer that is right horrible vgly to see, the which prayeth him for the loue of God and King Alexander, that he will graunt him this Day to eate his Almes before him vppon the earth in his hall. The Porter answered, I wonder that you dare desire that of my Lord: For why, all the Hall is

still full of Lords & Noblemen, & if they should behold you, they would all abhorre and forsake their meate: But for as much as you haue required me so lamentably, for the loue of God, I shall goe and doe your Errand whatsoeuer happen thereof, and so hee went forward and did his message vnto the Emperour. When the Emperour heard the Porter name Alexander the King of Ægypt, he said to the Porter, goe thy waies and bring him before mee how horrible and vglie soeuer that his visage be, and ordaine him a place before mee that he may eate, and fæd in my presence. The Porter brought him in imediately, and ordained him a place, and set him to meate before the Emperour. And when he had well refreshed himselfe, he said vnto one of the Emperours Seruants, My deere Friend, doe mee this errand vnto the Emperour, say vnto him, that I pray him for the loue of God and king Alexander, that he will send mee his Cup of Wine: The Seruant said for the loue of God I will do it, but I beleeue it will not bee, for if you should but touch my Lords cup, he will not by any meanes drinke of the same cup again; neuertheless he did the errand.

And when that the Emperor heard him to name king Alexander, he commaunded that his

Cup

Cup should be filled of the best wine, and carry it vnto him, the which Wine when he had receiued, he put it into his Bottle, and toke his King that Lodowick had giuen vnto him, and put it into the cup, and sent it againe vnto the Emperour.

And when the Emperour saw the King, he instantly knew that it was the same ring that hee had giuen vnto King Alexander in friendship when he last parted from him, and thought in his heart that King Alexander had bene dead, or else that this Man is very strangely come to the King, and commaunded presently that the Lazer should not depart thence vntill the time that he had spoken with him, for in no wise could he haue any knowledge of him, nor yet repute him for Alexander.

After that Dinner was done and ended, the Emperour tooke the sicke man apart, and asked him how he came by that King? King Alexander demaunded if that he knew well the King? The Emperour said, I know it right well. Alexander said, wote you also to whom you haue gaue it? The Emperour sayd, I wote right well. How is it then said Alexander, that you know not mee, for I am Alexander, vnto whome you gaue the same King? When the Emperour heard that, he fell to the

ground for sorrow, and tore his Robes and clothes, and with many great sighings and bewaylings said, O Alexander, you are the one halfe of my soule, where is your goodly and delicate body, now so vncleane and pittifully infected, that was so faire and pleasant to behold: Hée answered, this is happened vnto mee for the great fidelity that you haue done to mee in my bed with my wife, when you laid a naked sword betwixt you and her: wherefore she became wrath, & hated me, that shee and a knight that in former time shée loued, haue poysoned me, as you may sée, and now they haue driuen me out of my Realme.

And when the Emperour heard that, he for loue tooke him about the necke and kissed him, and said, O my most deare and intirely beloued Brother, I sorrow to sée you in this great perplexity & misery, I would to God I might die for you: but my most déere friend, suffer patiently a little time, till that we haue sent for all the Phisitians & wise maisters in physicke to haue their counsell and aduice, if there be any remedy to be had, or hope of recouering of your health: and if it be possible to helpe you, we shall neither spare Lordship, Empire, nor any other goods temporall, to make you whole and sound.

In

In the meane time hée was brought into a
te Chamber richly hanged, and appointed
all manner of thinges that were both requi-
e and necessary for his ease and health. Then
all hast hee sent his messengers through all
rts of the world, for the most expert and best
hisitions that might be found: Of which
ithin a Moneth after were come and assem-
ed before the Emperour, Thirty, which,
ere right expert and very skilfull in that
cience, to whom the Emperour said: My
elbeloued Maisters, I haue a friend that is
ry grieuously infected with a foule leprosie,
home I would very gladly were healed and
ade as sound and whole as euer he was, spa-
ng neither for gold nor siluer, nor any other
ods whatsoeuer that I haue in this whole
orld, but that I would gladly giue to recouer
s health againe.

Then answered the Maisters, all that euer
possible to bee done by Phisicke, you shall
one vnderstand after that wee haue séene the
rson: and when they saw him, they knew the
use of his infirmity, and they said it was in-
rable for all Phisitions liuing.

And when the Emperour had heard that, he
as right sorrie in his heart, and committed
vnto the helping hand of Almighty God,

calling

calling vnto him most of the Religious Men that dwelt nære vnto the Court, and a number of poore people, besides many other deuout persons, and desired of them all earnestly to make their Praiers vnto Almighty God, that he would vouchsafe of his infinite goodnes and mercy, to make whole his dære Friend King Alexander, and the soner for their good dædes and prayers. And he himselfe (with many others) fasted, and prayed humbly to Almighty God for the spædy recouery and health of his Friend.

Now vppon a day as King Alexander was at his Praiers, there came vnto him a voice from heauen, saying, Tell Lodowick the Emperour, that if hee with his owne hands will take those two little Children which his Empresse had at one burthen, and slay them, and that with the Blood of them he will wash and bath thy body, that then thy flesh shall become as faire and as clære as the bodies of those little Children: If not, thou must neuer looke to be cured whilest breath is in thy bodie, and so farewell.

When King Alexander had heard this most strange voice, he then began to thinke within himselfe, what voice it was, and from whence it came, then hee replied to himselfe, and said

thi

his vision is not to be shewed, for it is much ontrary to humane nature, that any man hould slay his owne Sons for the recouery of he health of a strange man.

The Emperour continued both night and ay in Praier, with great deuotion, still earestly praying to God for remedy for king Aexander, neuer ceasing, vntill such time that voice came vnto him, and sayd, how long will you thus call and cry vpon mee, when it was openlie shewed vnto King Alexander by what meanes he might recouer his health, and his body to become cleare, without either spot or blemish:

Now, the Emperour hauing heard that voice, hee arose and went vnto King Alexander, and sayde vnto him. Of all friends the best and most true, blessed bee the most high & euerlasting God, the which neuer faileth them that put their whole trust in him: Of whome I haue knowledge, that it is shewed vnto you how: and in what manner you may be recouered of your leaprosie, wherfore I intreate and desire you that you wil plainely lay open vnto mée how this may be done for the restoring of your former health, that we may haue ioy together; and if you shall néede any thing that may do you any good, I shall fulfill it vnto my

power, yea, and for your health giue all that I haue to.

Alexander said, sir, I dare not shew it to you how that I may be cured and healed of my leprosie, for it exceedeth, and it is a thing against nature for to be done, therefore I will not as yet shew it you, how bee it I haue great trust and confidence in you.

The Emperour sayd, Alexander put your trust in me still, for whatsoeuer is possible for to be done for recouering and restoring of your health I shall doe it, and therefore conceale nothing from me I pray you.

Then said Alexander, I haue of God knowledge, that if you will slay your Two Sonnes with your owne hands, and wash me in their blood, I shall be whole; and therefore I haue not shewed it vnto you, for mee thinketh it is against nature, that the Father should slay his owne children for the health of a stranger: the Emperour said, say not that you be a stranger, for I loue you as my selfe, and therefore if I had Ten Children, I should not spare one for your health.

After

Afterwardes the Emperour espied his time when the Empresse was out of the way, & hee went into the Chamber where the Children slept, and drew out his knife and cut both their throats, and gathered the blood into a vessell, and then he bathed & washed Alexander therwith: and when he was bathed, his body and flesh was as faire and cleane as though it had béene a young Childe. Then the Emperour had perfect knowledge of his visage, and kissed him, saying: O good Alexander, now I sée you in ỹ same forme which I haue oftentimes delighted in.

Blessed

Blessed bee Almighty God that euer I ha
these children, by whom your health is resto
red and your body made pure and cleane; an
as yet there were none that had knowledge o
the death of those children, saue only the Em
perour and Alexander.

And when the Emperour saw that good kin
Alexander was perfectly healed, hee said vnt
him, I shall ordayne vnto you an honourabl
company, and you shall goe from hence abou
ten miles, and the next day send me a messen
ger, and let me know the day of your comming
backe againe, and I shall then with great so
lemnity come and meete you, and you shall re
maine with mee vntill such time that I ma
conueniently prouide for the recouery of you
Realme againe.

This Counsell pleased king Alexander righ
well, and according to the Emperours will
was performed, for on the next day following
there came a Messenger vnto the Emperour
certifying him of the comming backe againe
King Alexander.

And when the Empresse heard these tiding
she reioyced, and said vnto the Emperour,
my most best beloued Lord and Emperour
haue you not iust cause to reioyce and be glad
seeing Alexander the King of Egypt is no
commin

ming to sée you, whome of a long time you
ue not séene? And if it please you to go and
æte him with your Lords and gentlemen, I
all follow you with my Ladies and Gentle-
omen: and as yet shee knew not of the death
f her two children,

Then rode the Emperour and the Empresse
ith a great company of Lords and Ladies to
æte with good King Alexander: and when
hey met together, with great reuerence and
onour they receiued him, and with great ioy
nd gladnesse they brought him into the Pal-
ace: And when the time of dinner was néere
t hand, Alexander was placed at the Table
etwéene the Emperor and the Empresse, and
ll the mirth and chéere that shée could make,
he shew vnto him.

And when the Emperour perceiued that, he
as right ioyfull and glad, and hée was so ex-
éeding well pleased, that he said, O mine owne
lorentine, it glads me aboue all things, that
ou make vnto king Alexander, so good chéere:
Then answered the Empresse and said, wher-
ore should I not, is not this company vnto vs
more precious then Gold or Siluer? But vn-
o you my renowned Lord much more, for by
is meanes it was that you attayned vnto so
reat honour and dignity, and by him many

times

times you haue bæne saued from death. The Emperor answered and said, then I pray you my onely beloued Florentine, that you will take hæd vnto my words that I shall say vnto you, saw you not that vglie and deformed Lazar which yesterday sate before our Table, and prayed mee for the loue of God and good king Alexander, that I would giue him drinke? She sayd, My honourable Lord, I saw him well a more horrible man I neuer did behold. Then said the Emperour I demaund this one question of you, put case that he were king Alexander and that he could not by any meanes bée made whole but with the blood of your two Sonnes both which you in one day brought into this world, would you not that their blood should be shed that he might bath himselfe therein, to the intent that thereby hee might haue perfect health and comely fauour, as now you sée him haue?

Shée answered and sayd vnto him, My renowned Lord and Husband, wherefore demaund you of mee that question? I say, and tell you of a troth, that if I had Ten Sonnes I should gladlie slay them with mine owne hands, for to prepare and ordayne for him a Bath, and would wash him therin mine owne selfe, rather then I should leaue him in such

loathsom

loathsome and miserable case, so horrible for to behold, and in such danger of death withall, God might well send vs more Children, but such a true & faithfull friend were a thing impossible for vs euer hereafter to find throughout all the world.

When the Emperour heard this from her, he was well pleased in his mind, and sayd, O my louing Empresse, had you rather haue your Children dead, then Alexander should languish in this Leaprosie? Then shall I open and shew you now the truth of the matter; that foule Lazer which you saw, was Alexander that sitteth here by vs, and by that meanes is made whole with the blood of our two sons, and they are dead.

Assoone as the Empresse did heare that, shee began with extreamity of sorrow mournefully to cry out, as nature would she should doe, although shee had said before that shee had rather see her Children dead, then Alexander should remaine in such paine and miserie.

The Nourishers of the Children vnderstanding this, they presently with great crying and weeping ran to the Nourserie and Chamber of them, and great sorrow and bewayling was made through the Emperours Court for his two Sons: and when the Nouvishers of them

came to the Chamber, they found the Children playing, and singing a song of praise & thanke giuing to the Father, Sonne, and the Holy Ghost, for restoring againe of their liues; and then they returned againe in all hast vnto the Emperour and the Empresse, and shewed vnto them how that the Children were liuing and that about their throats there where they were cut, they had circles of thred of gold, and thereof was great ioy and gladnesse in all the Court, with thanksgiuing to Almighty God for that exceeding great miracle and wonderful worke.

After that the Emperour with a great multitude and company of people gathered and assembled together, & went with king Alexander into Egypt, and set him againe in his Royalty and possession of his Realme. And the Quæne with the knight, who had liued long together in Adultery, hee caused them both to bee burnt. And when this was done, the Emperour had only one Sister, whom he married vnto king Alexander.

And when king Alexander had obtayned all his Realme againe, & was set in good rest and peace, the Emperour returned againe vnto his Empire: and then king Alexander right wisely and politikely gouerned himselfe in his af-

faire

faires, so that he ouercame his rebellious enemies.

And when that he was seated in all his glory, peace, and might, he had thought and mind vpon his Father and Mother, by whome hee was cast into the Sea, who dwelled in farre partes: And from thence he sent vnto them a messenger, to let them haue knowledge how that the king of Egypt vpon such a day would be with them, to view those parts of the Countrey, and to sport himselfe, and to make a royall Feast with them. And when the Messenger was thither come, they receiued him ioyfully, with bountifull entertainement, and large gifts to him giuen, and sent him backe againe, saying, that their Seruices should bee ready at all times to doe the kings pleasure, but that could they neuer by power discerne, that hee would vouchsafe to shew them that honour whereof they were not worthy, as for to come to them to visite those parts, & to sport himselfe there a while.

The Messenger returned backe towards the kings Court; and there shewed the king how willingly they would receiue him, and in what manner they did reward him, and how true and faithfull they were, and ready to doe him seruice at his commandement, wherewith

the King was well pleased. And when the day was come that was set, the King with a faire company rode towardes his Fathers House, the which was to the knight his Father, and to his mother, vnknowne that hee was their Sonne.

When the King was come nere vnto his fathers Castle, the knight rode ioyfully to meet and receiue him, and when hee came nigh to the King, hee a lighted from his horse, and did his reuerence vpon his knees, but the King toke him vp presently, and commanded him to take horse againe, and so they rode together vnto the Castle.

And when that they were come thither, the Mother came vnto him & fell vpon her knees, and welcomed him gladly, and the King tooke her vp as louingly and kissed her right friendly: and shee said vnto him, my most honourable Lord, you doe to vs (vnworthy) great honour with the presence of your most honourable personage, the which we shall neuer be able to deserue.

After that the meate was all ready, and that time of the day was come to goe to dinner, the Father came with a Bason and Ewer, and the Mother with a Towell, saying, Sir, all things are ready, pleaseth it you to wash? And when

the king saw that, he smiled and said to himselfe, new is the song of the Nightingale true: that my Father and my Mother should gladly fulfill as I haue said, if that I my selfe should thereunto consent, & suffer them to doe it. But hee would not suffer him to doe him any such seruice, saying, your age is to be honoured and worshipped, and therefore I will none of it, and then hee called one of his Seruants vnto him, whom he commaunded to doe that seruice. Then said the knight, you will not suffer vs to doe it for our honour, because we are not worthy thereof. The king said, haue I not said, that for your age I forbeare you: When the king was set at the Table hee set his Mother on the right hand of him, and his Father on the left side, and they as much as they might or durst, did behould his fauour and countenance.

After dinner, the king presently entred into a fayre Chamber, and made the knight with his Ladie to follow him in, and commaunded all others to auoid the presence.

And when they were all alone, the king said, haue you no children: They answerd we haue neither Son nor Daughter. And the king sayd, had you neuer any: The knight answerd, wee haue had one Sonne, but he is long agone dead.

Then the King asked of what death hee dyed. And the knight sayd, a naturall death. Then sayd the king, if I may otherwise know or find, then are you found with a most horrible fault. Then asked the knight, My most honourable and renowned Lord, wherefore enquire you so earnestly after our Son? The king answered and said, that do I not without iust cause, and therefore I must and will know of what death hee dyed; if you will not tell me, I shall cause you both to die a most shamefull and wicked death.

When they heard that, they fell vpon the ground on their knées before him, and asked him pardon and forgiuenesse of their liues. But the king would not suffer them for to kneele, but toke them vp and said, to that intent came I not vnto your house, to eate your bread, and so betray you, but say to me the very truth and you shall be pardoned, for it is giuen me to vnderstand that you haue put him to death, and if that you be found culpable therein, and come to iudgement, you must die a most shamefull death.

Then said the knight, My most honourable Lord pardon mee my life, and I shall shew you the very truth. The king said, feare not, for I shall doe vnto you no harme.

Then

Then answered the knight and sayd, My most dread Soueraigne Lord, wee had a Son that was wise, and learned, and right well vnderstood, and vpon a time as hee stood before vs, and serued vs at the table, there came vnto the window a Nightingale that sung exceeding sweetly, whose song he began to interpret, and to tell vs what it meant, and said: this Bird singeth that I shall become so great and mighty a Lord, that it shall be to your honour and aduancement, in such wise, that you my Father shall be glad to hold a Bason with water to wash my hands, and my Mother a Towell, if that I would suffer it.

And when I did heare that, I was sore moued and vexed in my mind, and so I toke him vpon my shoulder and cast him into the Sea for to drowne him.

Then said the king, what euill might haue come to you if he had bene made so great and mighty: me thinketh it should haue bene for your honour, comfort, and profit. The knight said, my renowned Lord, it was no reason, but a wodnesse.

The King answered, that was a great foolishnesse of you, that you would doe against the ordinance and will of God. But now yee shall know for troth, I am your Sonne that you did

cast into the Sea, and God of his great mercy and goodnesse hath saued me, and by his grace hath brought and preserued me to this Estate & dignity.

And the Father and Mother hearing that, with feare and ioy replenished and amazed, did fall flat to the ground; whome he louingly and friendlie toke vp saying, feare not, but rather reioyce & be glad, for you shall suffer no harme, but my exaltation shall be to your glory, ioy, & profit, and so he kist both his Father and Mother with great ioy and gladnesse. Then began the Mother to weepe and lament greatly, and the king sayd vnto her, leaue off your sorrowing and weeping and bee of good cheere, for in my Realme you shall be honoured aboue mee, during my life: and so he toke them both with him into his kingdome, where they dwelled a long time together in honour and ioy, and ended their daies with comfort and loue of all the people.

¶ Heere

¶ Heere followeth the application of the Example, to the purpose.

THen said Diocleſian the Emperours Son, Lord haue you vnderſtood what I haue ſaid: the Emperor ſayd, right well, Then ſayd the Son, my moſt honourable and redoubted Father, although that God hath giuen and indued mee with wiſedome and vnderſtanding aboue others, that ſhall not be an impayring of your honour and might, but more for the preſeruation and maintenance of the ſame. So in like manner the kings excellent Maieſty, which was nothing to the hinderance of the Father, but the rather for his worſhip, profit, & greater comfort: For as long as they liued, it was in very great ioy and mirth, and they were beloued of the people, & honoured of his kingdome. Then ſaid the Emperour, my beloued Sonne, I will wholy reſigne all the Empire vnto you to gouerne and rule, for I perceiue well by your Narration that you haue to me declared, that it

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is best for mee, and most for mine ease, that I now leaue this worldly and tedious businesse, and the labour and care of a king, and betake me to my rest and ease, for I am old and feeble. Then answered the Sonne, and sayd vnto his Father, My most honourable Lord and Father, so shall it not bee, but as long as you liue you shall haue the authority and gouernement of the Empire to doe your command, as it appertaineth vnto an Emperour; but in all the businesses that are laborious and troublesome, I will alwaies be ready to minister any seruice that possibly I can, according to my bounden duty.

¶ How

¶ How iudgement was giuen vpon the Empresse; and how she and her Louer were put to death.

THen the Emperour commaunded the Iudges and Iusticesto sit in Iudgement, and to bring againe the Empresse before them with the Ladyes, & also the Kybaud her best beloued, cloathed in the vesture and habite of a woman, whome he did cause to stand next vnto the Empresse: Then the Emperours Son asked sentence and iust iudgment vpon them, saying.

My most honourable Lord and Father, euen as you are Emperour ouer all the World, and that your Maiestie and power requireth to doe true Iustice vnto all your Subiects that desire it: So now I demaund that you this day doe giue right sentence and true iudgment vpon the vntroth, falshood, and shame which were put and alleaged vnto mee by the Empresse, for the which accusations I haue bæne Seauen times led vnto the Gallowes, and haue

haue stood in great iespardy & perill of my life and also that she hath bæn to you vntrue of her bodie, as you haue sæne by good prowfe made before you, on the which I aske iudgement, and therefore command your Iudges and Iustices to giue sentence thervpon according to right, equity and Law.

Assone as the Empresse heard this, shes fel flat to the earth before the Emperour, & asked mercy and forgiuenesse for her iust offence and misdoing, but it helped nor profited her nothing, for the son would haue right, and desired Iudgement

Then spake the Iudges and Iustices, her owne misdæds condemne her, and the report of her Lemman by her kept and found, therefore wee giue sentence against the Empresse, that shæ shall be bound to a horse taile, & drawne through all the stræts of the Citty to the place of execution, and there to be burnt: We iudge and giue sentence against the Rybaud, that hæ shall bee quartred and smitten in pæces, and his flesh cast to the Hounds and Birds of the Ayre, for to deuoure him: and this sentence was approbated and allowed of all the people.

Hereafter in short time died the Emperour, and Diocleſian his Sonne gouerned and ruled the Empire with great wisedome, and alwaies held

held and kept his Maisters with him in great honour and glory: By whose counsell and wisedome he gouerned the Empire, that he excelled all his Predecessors in riches, and doing right and iustice, And his Maisters so loued him aboue all others in the world, that many times they put themselues in great perill and ieopardy of their liues for him. And so ended their daies in great ioy and honour, to the praise of Almighty God.

FINIS.

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